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ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 28 Dec

LD2812064793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0627 GMT 28 Dec 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS - Russia's Moscow-based newspapers comment on the operation to rescue a group of schoolchildren from Rostov-on-Don, who were taken hostage by a group of gunmen on December 23.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the hostage drama:

A large number of criminals, including those from immediate- neighbour and far off countries, operate in Russia now. Therefore "it would be too early so far to forget about this dramatic happening".

PRAVDA on the same subject:

"The operation to rescue the hostages has ended but people's hearts still harbour anxiety and uncertainty about their future, the life of their children and family members, and homes."

TRUD on the hostage-rescue operation:

"In Russia, hostages are seized 10-15 times a month. There have been 69 such incidents within half a year". "Another seven seizures happened within the four days of the hostage-rescue operation alone".

Among other important topics, the Russian press singles out the coming into force of Russia's new constitution and the summing up of the results of elections to a new Russian parliament.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the new constitution:

"The Russian people have adopted new, quite modern rules of political conduct, a code of the authorities' actions and a procedure for cooperation between the authorities and citizens.

"In the history of Russia, this means that through the sovereign will of the people the barrier on the way to a new state and society has been drawn up and some, most important road signs have been placed."

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on election results and possible changes in the government structure:

The newspaper gives the opinion of Otto Latsis, member of the Presidential Council, who believes that the reason given for the defeat of Russia's Choice during the election to the Federal Assembly is incorrect, since "everywhere in the world a defeat means the fact that a party polls a much lesser number of votes than during a previous election".

"In this case, there is nothing to compare these results with because the party itself has been in existence for only three months", Latsis maintains, emphasising a "mysterious change has occurred in the sociological surveys' data to which everyone was oriented".

"Thus, this is not a defeat but a 'wrongful expectation'," Latsis concludes, calling for keeping the main team, who determine the orientation of reforms, in the government structure.

PRAVDA analyses the official results of the referendum on the Russian Federation constitution. The results have been made public by the Central Electoral Commission.

Giving the number of voters who took part in the polling as well as proportions of those voting for and against the new constitution, the newspaper observes that "in April 1993 the number of citizens who had the right to participate in a referendum was officially defined as 107,310,000. Towards the end of the year the number of voters in Russia turned out to be only 106,182,000. Where are the missing 1.13 million adult Russians?"

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER) comments on the first meeting of the organising committee to prepare the first sessions of the new parliament. Almost all leaders of Duma parties and blocs took part in the committee's meeting. The newspaper notes the maximum caution and minimal publicity in preparations for a future parliament session. "The deputies apparently do not plan so far any tough moves, at the initial stage of their activities, at any rate, keeping in mind the lessons of the October events".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on the results of the CIS Summit in Ashgabat:

"Notwithstanding the warmth and solemnity of joint meetings, the leaders of the ex-Soviet republics come to see for themselves that their on-on-one meetings with one another are both more frank and more fruitful.

"An economic union has been finally shaped. Turkmenistan, which previously feared rigid obligations in implementing common decisions, has become the last to become a full member of the economic union".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR) on the importance of talks in Almaty between Russian and Kazakhstan delegations on ensuring the functioning of Baykonur cosmodrome. The heads of government signed a number of documents during the talks.

"It is important that the documents deal not so much with the cosmodrome as with test sites on the territory of Kazakhstan, and military cooperation. The fact that ice has been broken in this respect is perhaps the most important result of the talks".

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA emphasises that the meeting between Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan was the first Russo-Kazakhstan summit after the sudden coolness in relations between Moscow and Almaty.

In this connection the newspaper writes: "After the 'rouble-related scandal', after Andrey Kozyrev's incautious statements, after accusations expressed by Aleksandr Shokhin,

who considered Kazakhstan to be the initiator of the establishment of an 'alternative' economic union of Asian countries, and following the insulting televised remarks by the prominent leader of one of largest parliamentary parties of Russia (the newspaper means Vladimir Zhirinovskiy—note by ITAR-TASS), the premier becomes a figure who can save if only the atmosphere of Russo-Kazakhstan cooperation, if not the essence of it".

Press Review for 29 Dec

LD2912063493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0619 GMT 29 Dec 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 29 TASS—Russian newspapers run articles dealing with New-Year's Eve and continue to analyse the results of elections to the new Russian parliament, forecasting the development of the political situation in Russia next year.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI recalls that the first meeting of the Federal Assembly is to be held on January 11, 1994, and that a centre for the preparation of the parliament's session has been established by a presidential decree.

"It is the main concern of presidential institutions to ensure cooperation between the executive and legislative branches of power from the very first days of the functioning of the Federal Assembly.

"With this end in view, working commissions have been set up to deal with organisational arrangements for the parliament's first meetings, beginning with the accommodation of working parliamentary bodies.

"The deputies' task is somewhat differenet: not only to apprehend proposals from the executive authority and critically assess them but also to affirm their independence from the very outset".

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the state of affairs in the deputies' corps.

The newspaper points out that members of parliament are already preparing their own proposals as regards an agenda and top priority parliamentary decisions. A forecast has been made about candidature for the post of the chairman of the Federation Council, the house of parliament representing the Russian Federation's regions.

The newspaper's correspondent believes that former Moscow City Council Chairman Nikolay Gonchar, "whose even temper and diplomatic abilities are well known from his previous activities", may be elected to the post.

"It seems, a decision about a speaker of the State Duma will be more difficult to make. A number of future factions have already suggested their candidates. Since none of the factions will have a clear majority in the State Duma, a sound decision will depend on the factions' ability to go to a compromise".

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on the rating of Russia's leading politicians in December this year.

The newspaper, referring to estimates made by Russia's Choice, points out that a majority in the State Duma will be made up of a coalition consisting of the Communists, the Agrarian Union, the Democratic Party, headed by Nikolay Travkin, and the Civil Union.

As far as the rating is concerned, the first five are President Boris Yeltsin, Liberal Democratic Party [of Russia, LDPR] leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, First Vice-Premier Yegor Gaydar, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and prominent economist Grigory Yavlinsky. Leader of Russian Communists Gennadiy Zyuganov is also among the first ten politicians, according to the newspaper.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA gives the opinion of Nikolay Medvedev, chief of the Presidential Administration Directorate for Territorial Affairs, that the elections to the new parliament have shown the 'lumpen mentality' of Russia's electorate. Explaining the fact that many Russians cast their votes for LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, Medvedev pointed out that Zhirinovskiy had made use of the thesis about a strong power in the Russian state.

"A strong executive power in the person of president is, of course, essential in Russia. He must rise above all branches of power. The president should be as if an arbiter for all of them. Such an approach to the power structure on the whole accords not only with the present state of society but with Russian mentality as well. This is what the shadow cabinet of Mr Zhirinovskiy took into account and made use of adroitly".

PRAVDA on parliament make-up.

"Russia's Choice has the largest group in the State Duma. Its image can be easily judged from the party list which includes incumbent cabinet ministers, high-ranking and lower-level officials of presidential institutions... Absent from the list are workers, farmers, teachers, and physicians—those who live only on their own earnings".

RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA on economic situation and ways to stabilise it.

The newspaper emphasises that Russia's industrialists need a political organisation of their own and that Russia should be administered by "persons who are vitally interested in the country's prosperity".

TRUD on a 'Ural lobby' idea.

The newspaper reports that a group of deputies from the Sverdlovsk region (Urals) called on their colleagues from other areas of the region to set up an assembly of Uralic deputies in the new Russian parliament—a 'Ural lobby' which will promote the building of Russian statehood.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA discusses the economic situation in Abkhazia and carries several interviews with schoolchildren from Rostov on Don who

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Holds News Briefing

Naval Exercises With Kuwait Explained

LD2812145193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1424 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Boris Krivoshey and Aleksandr Krylovich]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—When involving in military-technical interaction with states of the Persian Gulf, Moscow "proceeds from the fact the interaction aims to consolidate peace and security in the delicate region, whose stability is needed by the whole international community," head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's information and press department Grigory Karasin told a briefing here today.

The statement was made to comment on a recent Kuwaiti naval exercises in the Persian Gulf with participation of several Russian warships.

"The Russian Foreign Ministry considers it necessary to stress these actions are not aimed against a third side," stressed the ministry representative.

Topics for Clinton Visit Previewed

LD2812145393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1425 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Boris Krivoshey and Aleksandr Krylovich]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—A Russian visit of U.S. President Bill Clinton scheduled for January 12 through 15, 1994, will continue the search for ways to expand Russian-U.S. partnership that was begun at the Vancouver summit in April 1993, head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's information and press department Grigoriy Karasin told a briefing here today.

In his words, the two presidents will sum up the results of efforts to eliminate the cold war heritage in Russian-U.S. relations and discuss bilateral cooperation in the light of current Russian reforms.

They will also focus on security aspects, including cooperation in arms control and global non-proliferation of nuclear arms, and key international issues, as well as the role of multilateral peace-keeping forces in settlement of regional conflicts.

Hopes for Butrus-Ghali's Korean Tour

LD2812151493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1426 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Boris Krivoshey and Aleksandr Krylovich]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—Russia hopes meetings of United Nation's Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali with heads of the two Korean states will give a fresh political impetus to negotiations of North Korea and the IAEA, North Korea and the United States on nuclear non-proliferation and boost the search for the soonest improvement of the situation on the Korean peninsula, head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's information and press department Grigoriy Karasin told a briefing here today.

Russia also hopes the North Korean visit of Butrus-Ghali will have a positive influence on North Korean-South Korean relations and create a favorable atmosphere for the Korean dialogue. The latter will help settle the Korean crisis and ensure peace and security on the peninsula.

"The crossing of the 38th parallel may soon stop being a privilege of a few politicians and become a norm of interstate communication between the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and South Korea," said the Russian diplomat.

"The demarcation line that separated the two states for over 40 years should finally become a boundary of peace and friendship between the countries striving for unification," stressed Karasin.

Comments on POW's, Karabakh, Kurils

LD2812174693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1617 GMT 28 Dec 93

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[Text] To adopt the ethnic, selective approach in efforts to free former Soviet servicemen can only play into the hands of those destructive forces in Afghanistan which are openly interested in blocking the release of POWs. This is how Grigoriy Karasin, spokesman for the Russian Foreign Ministry, commented at Tuesday's [28 December] briefing in Moscow on the report that Ukrainian officials had met in the Pakistani city of Peshawar with the representatives of Golboddin Hekmatyar's Islamic Party of Afghanistan to discuss the release of ethnic Ukrainians held by the group.

According to the diplomat, "no one disputes Ukraine's right and duty to protect the interests of its citizens."

"However in this case it's a problem inherited by all members of the Commonwealth, and of equal concern for the public in each of our countries," he said.

Moscow, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said, "stands for interaction between all CIS countries in the spirit of understanding stated in the agreement of April 28, 1993, which provides for taking joint steps aimed at spotting and freeing the prisoners of war regardless of their nationality and citizenship."

This document, he stressed, was signed by the prime ministers of ten CIS countries, including Ukraine. "In our practical work in this direction we have invariably adhered to these principles. Witness the fact that, thanks

to our efforts, servicemen from Ukraine, Moldova and Uzbekistan, not only from Russia, were freed and returned to their homes," Karasin said.

As Karasin said, participants in the Ashgabat summit settled the incident of November 20, when Russia's mediatory mission [in Nagorno-Karabakh] came under fire from the Armenian side. "The apologies presented to Russia were found sufficient for continuing Russian mediation in the efforts to settle the Karabakh conflict with Armenian participation," he said.

The spokesman for Russia's Foreign Ministry voiced concern about the resumption of military actions in the area of the Armenian-Azeri conflict, and about "the attempts of one of the two sides to launch a counter-offensive to achieve a turning point in the confrontation." "This disrupted the endeavors to bring about a ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh," he said.

According to the diplomat, the involvement of "outside forces known for their extremism" does nothing to promote a political solution. "Russia unambiguously condemns all forms of using and recruiting mercenaries," Karasin pointed out.

Karasin pointed out that Japan has recently been "exaggerating" the issue on detention of Japanese fishing boats by the Russian authorities in the region of South Kurils. "The Japanese party is guided by the idea that the South Kuril Islands are its territory and therefore tries to protest against detention of Japanese fishing boats in the water area near the islands. We categorically reject this idea," he emphasized.

According to the diplomat, "it should be made clear: the water area surrounding the South Kurils is within Russia's composition and it is under Russia's efficient control."

"Ships and citizens of all other countries, including Japan, are under Russian jurisdiction and the Russian laws. This concerns not only the South Kurils region but the whole Russian maritime frontier. There is no connection between this and the peace treaty issue at the Russian-Japanese negotiations, as Japan sometimes affirms," Karasin pointed out.

In his words, "the number of violations of the Russian maritime frontier by Japanese ships for illegal fishing has not decreased over the recent years. There were 7,558 such violations in 1991, 7,932 in 1992 and 7,690 in 1993. These actions not only exhaust fish reserves of the world's ocean but are also counter-productive from the point of view of the Russian-Japanese relations, including the negotiations on the peace treaty," the diplomat pointed out.

He emphasized that Russian frontier guards would continue "to undertake all necessary measures against the violators regardless of which state they belong to."

Karasin voiced hope that "competent Japanese bodies, including both the central ones and the ones on the Hokkaido island would take the appropriate measures to prevent such violations."

Karasin said representatives of Russia, the U.S., Japan and the European Community today signed a protocol on temporary implementation of the agreement on setting up an international scientific and technical center in Moscow.

He reminded of the fact that the agreement was concluded on November 27, 1992 to be sent for consideration by the Supreme Soviet of Russia. "However, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation has never completed its consideration," Karasin said. He hoped that "Russia's new parliament will complete the comprehensive examination of the agreement as soon as possible, taking into account its priorities."

The center will finance peaceful scientific and technological projects designed by both Russian and foreign scientists. The Western participants of the projects allocated about $70 million for its future programs.

Karasin said about a dozen countries had expressed their desire to join the center's activities.

Notes Warning to Zhirinovskiy

LD2812204093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1837 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Russian Ambassador to Bulgaria, Aleksandr Avdeyev, spoke to leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party [LDP], Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who was on a non-official visit to the country, and warned him about the unacceptability of statements hampering the Russian-Bulgarian relations. This was announced by the Russian Foreign Ministry's official representative, Grigoriy Karasin, at a briefing in Moscow on Tuesday [28 December].

The LDP leader in fact spoke for the resignation of Bulgarian President Zhelu Zhelev and for appointment of one of his Bulgarian supporters to this post.

Bulgaria Tells Zhirinovskiy To Leave Within 24 Hours

LD2812205493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1926 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS Vladimir Abrosimov]

[Text] Sofia December 28 TASS—Bulgarian Interior Minister Viktor Mikhaylov announced today their decision to strip Russian Liberal-Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy of the right to stay in Bulgaria. Zhirinovskiy has been warned to leave the country within 24 hours.

A report of the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry circulated here today says a reason for this is "insulting remarks

and characteristics" made by Zhirinovskiy in address of the Bulgarian state head, as well as his pronouncements estimated as interference in Bulgarian internal affairs, which create prerequisites for aggravation of Bulgarian relations with the neighbouring states.

Upon his arrival in Sofia on Saturday Vladimir Zhirinovskiy called for resignation of Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev and expansion of Bulgarian territory with Macedonia.

The Liberal-Democratic Party leader told a news conference earlier today he plans to leave for Berlin on Wednesday morning.

Yeltsin-Clinton Summit To Discuss 'Partnership'

LD2812143093 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Announcer-read commentary by "analyst" Yuriy Soltan]

[Excerpts] A state visit by the head of the Washington administration to Russia is to take place on January 12th through the 15th, and this has been officially confirmed by President Boris Yeltsin's press service. And more details by our analyst Yuriy Solton, and this is what he writes:

[Solton] The program of the visit is yet to be worked out, but the key elements to confer [as heard] are clearly known to the leaders of the two countries. The present summit meeting, unlike the previous ones, will concern not so much the obstructions of the past bilateral relations as what and how should determine Russia's and the United States' joint partnership by the end of the nineties and at the beginning of the next century. [passage omitted]

To my mind, writes Yuriy Solton, President Clinton has recently stressed once again that he is certainly prepared to cooperate with President Yeltsin and to support the reforms he conducts. And Russia needs such support, notably the cooperation on an equal basis with the United States and other Western partners. An important economic accord has already been signed during a recent visit to Moscow by the United States Vice President Al Gore. Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton are expected to exchange their views on what extraordinary steps should be taken to positively steer the reforms in Russia. The summit meeting will also spare some time to discuss pivotal problems at issue, including the security and nuclear arms non-proliferation problems. A major strategic arms reduction treaty is likely to be signed before the American-Russian accord will be initialled.

Bill Clinton comes to Moscow soon after the NATO leaders meet in Brussels. Reports suggest that the American idea of partnership for the sake of peace will be endorsed there. It provides for more NATO-sponsored ties with the Central and East European countries, and Russia as well, in the military field and peacekeeping operations. President Yeltsin has approved of this idea in principle. Of course, the present good relations the two countries enjoy do not in any way imply that there are no problems they can argue about, or that they can take no alternative standpoints concerning any specific problem. However, the main point is that Russia and the United States are working side by side on a solid partnership foundation which has become a serious factor of international stability.

U.S. Envoy Apologizes for Bodyguard During Gore Visit

LD2812144493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1422 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Kondratenko]

[Text] St. Petersburg December 28 TASS—A bodyguard of the U.S. vice-president rudely pushed aside a top Russian military commander during the recent visit of Albert Gore to St. Petersburg and U.S. Ambassador in Russia Thomas Pickering had to apologise for that.

Commander of the Leningrad Military District Colonel-General Sergey Seleznev was attending the welcoming ceremony in the "Pulkovo" airport in St. Petersburg when he was rudely pushed aside by an American who greatly resembled U.S. vice-consul in St. Petersburg Andrew Goodman.

But the ambassador explained on Monday at a meeting with St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoly Sobchak that this was a bodyguard of the U.S. vice-president who was unfamiliar with the Russian diplomatic protocol.

The sides agreed that the incident was over.

Gore Shows 'Disrespect'

MK2912105093 Moscow ROSSIYA in Russian No. 1, 29 Dec 93-4 Jan 94 (Signed to press 28 Dec) p 1

[Unattributed report]

[Text] U.S. Vice President's Albert Gore's visit to Russia, considered fairly successful, has ended in St. Petersburg. And suddenly reports began appearing in the St. Petersburg press about complaints made by corresponding subdivisions of the mayor's office to the U.S. Consulate General in connection of the "technical problems" that emerged in the course of the visit. One of its officers, Mr. A. Goodman, has been declared a kind of persona non grata. On the other hand, there are reports that the U.S. side has also made representations on this count. A city resident, who knows about what has happened but for understandable reasons wishes to call himself P.O., has shared his knowledge with ROSSIYA.

As is known, during an official visit protocol requirements of the receiving side prevail. This time around the Russians were told that A. Gore would be met in St. Petersburg according to U.S. protocol. On arriving at Pulkovo airport the vice president's car was delivered

right to the gangway. At this point Mr. Goodman displayed the American understanding of the protocol. During the meeting at the airfield he pushed back Colonel General S. Seleznev, commander of the Leningrad Military District.

Contrary to the existing procedure, during the trip around the city, the vice president's wife, not city Mayor A. Sobchak, was in A. Gore's car. As it turned out later, she decided to assume some functions of the receiving side. The vice president allowed himself to come half an hour late to a widely publicized meeting with the city public in the Tavricheskiy Palace. Actually, he arrived there on time but decided to sit in the waiting room for 30 minutes. He was presented to the audience by his wife, not by Anatoliy Sobchak. The witnesses had the impression that A. Gore was deliberately ignoring the mayor. He did not pay an official visit to the Smolnyy [city hall], replacing it with a meeting in the residence. The official lunch on behalf of the mayor and an analogous reception at the Consulate General are shrouded in mystery. What lies behind the disrespect demonstrated by the high-ranking guest?

As we were advised in the Russian Federation Foreign Affairs Ministry, it has no information about any incidents during the U.S. Vice President's visit to St. Petersburg.

A statement by the U.S. Embassy to the Russian Federation on this score describes the indiscreet actions by organizers of the visit as "definitely unintentional" and expresses regret over "any misunderstanding that may have arisen from this."

Yeltsin Signs Order on Assisting Russian-U.S. Foundation

LD2712200093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1957 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow December 27 ITAR-TASS—Following the establishment of the Russian-American Entrepreneurship Foundation aiming to assist the development of private businesses in Russia, Russian President Boris Yeltsin has signed an executive order to implement a string of measures to assist the Foundation in its activity.

Yeltsin ordered the Government of the Russian Federation to extend all required assistance to the Foundation, according to the presidential press office.

Yeltsin Issues Edict on CIS Unified Juridical Information

LD2712195593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1933 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow, 27 Dec (ITAR-TASS)—Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin has issued an edict entitled "Questions of Creating a Unified Juridical Information Space for the Commonwealth of Independent States." The document approves the draft outline drawn up by a number of ministries and departments with regard to creating, within the framework of the CIS, an interstate system of juridical information intended to support and develop cooperation in juridical information among the CIS member states. This is reported in an announcement from the Russian Federation presidential press service.

Chernomyrdin Seen 'Salvaging' Kazakhstan Ties

MK2812124093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Vitaliy Portnikov report in the "Visit" column: "Nazarbayev Comes to Terms With Chernomyrdin. The First Russian-Kazakhstan Summit After the Scandal Over the 'New Type Ruble Zone'"]

[Text] During the visit by the Russian Government delegation led by Viktor Chernomyrdin to Almaty a compromise was finally reached over the famous Baykonur space launching site. Put simply, Russia wanted it for itself, which did not suit the Kazakhstanis. Kazakhstan proposed the creation of a new international organization which would include not only Kazakhstan and Russia. This, in turn, did not suit Moscow, since the "third party" was to be the fraternal Ukraine. A compromise was made: Russia will lease the site from Kazakhstan. And although this general accord is yet to be specified, it is noteworthy that it was made during the first meeting of Russian and Kazakhstani leaders after Moscow's refusal to transfer to Kazakhstan new-issue cash rubles, which speeded up the introduction of Kazakhstan's own national currency. In fact, immediately after that Russian Federation Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev arrived in Almaty in a somewhat unusual capacity of a defender of Russian-speakers' interests. His mission led to President Nazarbayev's illness, while Kazakhstan Prime Minister Sergey Tereshchenko, incidentally also a Russian-speaker, had to remind, in a tone uncharacteristic of Russian-Kazakhstani relations, the Moscow guest about the existence of the Kazakh and Turkic population in general outside Kazakhstan's borders, in Russia. The meetings between Presidents Yeltsin and Nazarbayev scheduled since then were repeatedly postponed. No such meeting took place in Ashgabat either, although during the CIS leaders summit both Yeltsin and Nazarbayev found time for bilateral talks, for instance, with Leonid Kravchuk. Some time ago, however, there was a telephone conversation between Yeltsin and Nazarbayev during which the Russian president assured his Kazakhstani counterpart that he was aware of the nonexistence of the "Russian problem" in Kazakhstan and even promised to announce that in public. Prime Minister Chernomyrdin was the first Russian leader to make such a statement, in an interview with Ostankino.

Preparations for his visit in Almaty were made especially carefully. President Nazarbayev was even going to cut short his presence in Ashgabat to talk with the Russian premier. In addition to the talks between Chernomyrdin and his counterpart Sergey Tereshchenko, there were also talks with the president, which became the highlight of the visit. It is worth recalling at this point that it was

to Kazakhstan that Viktor Chernomyrdin made his first visit when he became Russia's prime minister. His talks with Nursultan Nazarbayev were devoted to problems of the oil and gas complex, very well known to the premier, which have now become a priority in the Kazakhstan economy. Unlike the relations with the Russian president, which have been developing in a fairly difficult and halting manner—and Nazarbayev's relationship with Yeltsin began back at the time of the Soviet Union and was subjected to the test of the Belovezhskaya Forest agreements—it was apparently easier for the Kazakhstan president-economic manager to conduct a dialogue with the premier- economic manager. At any rate, in Almaty Viktor Chernomyrdin was accorded full respects in line with his status—and even more.

After the unexpected cooling off in the relations between Moscow and Almaty following the ruble scandal, Andrey Kozyrev's incautious statements, Aleksandr Shokhin's charges holding Kazakhstan responsible for initiating an "alternative" economic union of Asian countries, and the insulting TV statements by a well-known leader of one of Russia's largest parliamentary parties, the premier is turning into a figure capable of salvaging if not the essence then at least the general atmosphere of Russia-Kazakhstan cooperation. In any event, that much was made clear to Viktor Chernomyrdin in Almaty.

IZVESTIYA Defends Report on Estonian Premier's Remarks

PM2912105193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Dec 93 First Edition p 4

[Unattributed account of press statements issued by Estonian president's press service, followed by editorial commentary: "Estonia's President Protests to IZVESTIYA..."]

[Text] Ar.ur Laast, the Republic of Estonia's ambassador in Moscow, has relayed to the IZVESTIYA editorial office the following statement by the Estonian president's press service:

"President Lennart Meri of the Republic of Estonia expresses regret at the publication in IZVESTIYA of two articles dated 22 December. The first article, headlined 'Estonian President Lennart Meri: "I Regret Our Treating the Russians So Well" ' and written by Lord Nicholas Bethell, contains serious distortions and arbitrary cuts. The second article, headlined 'Tallinn's Foolish Policy Could Transform Estonia Into the Provinces of Estland and Livland' and written by the newspaper's deputy chief editor, Leonid Mlechin, represents crude and unsubstantiated attacks on Estonian-Russian relations and on the state independence of the Republic of Estonia.

"As for the first article, the facts are as follows. President Meri did indeed meet with Lord Bethell, Mrs. Lenz, and Mr. Hartmann, members of a European Parliament delegation, 23 November. Lord Bethell prepared a newspaper article for IZVESTIYA on the basis of this meeting. Unfortunately, editors on this paper cut over one-third of the text and tendentiously distorted what the president had said. Anyone who wishes to verify the degree of bias with which this was done can compare the text in IZVESTIYA with another article by Lord Bethell published in THE TIMES for 30 November.

"In the second article Mr. Mlechin uses the distortions primarily to mount attacks on Estonian-Russian relations and even threatens Estonia's state independence. As Mr. Mlechin and his newspaper are both aware, relations between Estonia and Russia have improved over the last year, and these two states have good diplomatic ties. The timing of this article nevertheless suggests that Mr. Mlechin and maybe others sheltering behind him want to turn aside from this road—obviously in response to the Russian election results, which unfortunately revealed strong support for a party that wishes to reoccupy Estonia.

"The president of Estonia protests these two unfortunate articles and would like to remind the Russian, Estonian, and other peoples that Tallinn will always seek good relations with Russia and the Russians. Estonia will continue to support any positive development in Russia, conscious that the country's road into the future will certainly be difficult and that there is sometimes a chance of unpleasant episodes like these two articles attesting to what we hope are temporary deviations."

At virtually the same time Albert Maloveryan, the ITAR-TASS correspondent in Tallinn, translated and transmitted to the IZVESTIYA editorial office a statement by the Estonian president's press service titled "Who Called the Tune" and disseminated inside the republic. Both statements are devoted to the IZVESTIYA pieces, but in the second everything indicates that the press service did not mind its language:

"The falsification of texts, selective cuts, and the highlighting of fragments of sentences taken out of context are methods from the realm of propaganda warfare and ploys that are very familiar to readers of the former Soviet press. IZVESTIYA has demonstrated its 'professionalism' in a sphere that does no credit to a reputable paper. In whose interests are Russian propaganda big guns taking aim at Estonian-Russian relations and the president of the Republic of Estonia?...

"Through the agency of Lord Bethell IZVESTIYA is trying to rally the Russian nationalists in Moscow and at the same time to warn NATO against discussing problems of the security of the Baltic region. IZVESTIYA is prepared to sacrifice Estonian-Russian relations in order to achieve this aim...."

...Although the President's Press Service Essentially Denies Nothing

The most striking thing about the denial by the Estonian president's press service is the fact that it does not venture to deny anything. Tallinn does not even try to dispute the accuracy of the anti-Russian remarks by

Lennart Meri reproduced in IZVESTIYA. There are no complaints about the newspaper in this regard. The press service accuses the editorial office of distorting the author—British Lord Bethell—and alludes to his article in THE TIMES.

The Estonian president's press service is mistaken. The article by Bethell mentioned in the statement, which also mentions Aleksandr Rutskoy and the fact that Lennart Meri is making a library of books presented by the Russian ambassador, was printed by IZVESTIYA 2 December. After the elections the British lord wrote a new article, or rather sent to IZVESTIYA a monologue by Meri which he had recorded. We published the article without distortions or falsifications. Lord Bethell called IZVESTIYA especially to say that he has no complaints about the editorial office.

As for the editorial commentary accompanying Lord Bethell's article, it discussed the seriousness of the situation connected with the position of Russian-speakers in Estonia. These people have reason to fear that the Estonian leaders want to get them out or, to use a more terrible word, deport them from Estonia while forcing the West to turn a blind eye to this. So far they have not had very much success in this, as shown by the UN General Assembly resolution titled "The Human Rights Situation in Latvia and Estonia" adopted last week.

It looks as though Zhirinovskiy's success in the elections suited the Baltic leaders more than a democrat victory, since it gave them a much-desired trump card for reproaches to the West: Now do you see why we want to join NATO and get rid of our Russians?

Blinded by their own nationalism, Baltic politicians are unable to appreciate the danger of the Russian nationalism that they themselves are cultivating. Even after the elections in Russia the Latvian parliament adopted a law on elections of organs of self-government which deprives noncitizens (several hundred thousand people, mostly Russians) of the right to vote. Riga ignored protests not only from Moscow, but also from the Council of Europe, the CSCE, and the high commissioner for ethnic minorities. And it strengthened the position of those forces in Russia that believe that it is pointless to hold talks with the Baltic countries.

If radical nationalists come to power in Moscow, they will speak to Estonia in the language of tanks. It is this that our paper is trying to explain to Estonian politicians.

Background to 'Impracticable' Cuba Deal Viewed

PM2812141993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Dec 93 First Edition p 3

[Yevgeniy Bay report: "Moscow Avoids Falling Out with Castro by Signing Impracticable Treaty"]

[Text] The signing of joint Russian-Cuban accords on trade and economic cooperation, accompanied by the popping of champagne corks at the President Hotel functions hall, was meant to symbolize the restoration of ties between Moscow and Havana which were half-broken following the USSR's collapse. But the dark faces of Cuban delegation members (in contrast with the strained optimism of Russian delegates) prompted grave doubts that any "historic deal" had been struck.

Russian delegation head Vladimir Shumeyko told journalists that next year Russia will receive 1.5 million tonnes of Cuban sugar, and will supply the island with about 4 million tonnes of oil in exchange. This accord, in his words, is extremely advantageous for Russia, with Cuba remaining its most important supplier of relatively cheap sugar. For his part, Cuba's Council of Ministers Vice President Lionel Soto contained himself to just one single sentence, reluctantly confirming that "relations between our countries are indeed moving on to a new stage."

According to reports from various sources, the Cubans' dark mood was due to the fact that Russia had proposed to use oil as means of payment not only for Cuban sugar deliveries but also for the rent for its military installations on the island, particularly the radio electronic monitoring center. This topic was discussed last month, during the Moscow visit by a Cuban military delegation (IZVESTIYA No. 229), but the sides parted having simply failed to find a common language. The Cubans demanded as rent for the base the incredible sum of $1 billion per annum, whereas our Ministry of Defense agreed to just one-sixth of this amount.

Now, judging by everything, there was a strong temptation to resolve all problems in one fell swoop. Moscow felt that Cuba, panting from the shortage of energy sources, needed Russian oil so badly that Havana would accept whatever conditions we set. It did not. Consequently Shumeyko advised the Cubans to "calmly go back home and think everything over well once more."

It was only late in the evening of Friday [24 December] that Moscow, eager to avoid openly falling out with Castro, eventually decided to sign the trade protocol, but without champagne or journalists, because the figures contained in the protocol are lower than those announced by the Russian vice premier. But one of the Russian side's spokesmen advised journalists "not to pay attention" even to those new figures since "even at that level the agreement is almost impracticable."

The stance of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, advocating the development of bilateral relations with Cuba, is quite logical on the surface. Russia can obtain from Cuba, on a stable basis and without any intermediaries, the quantity of sugar we need as and when we need it. The shipment of oil takes place over a period of a few months, which is also within Russia's capability (with the Cubans providing a concealed interest-free financing of Russian imports). Finally, it is quite important that part of the sugar will be paid for by Russian goods which are uncompetitive in the world market (only Castro would accept something that nobody else needs any more).

This well-organized system leaves one problem unresolved: The Cubans' inability to honor their commitments. This year Cuba should have delivered about 1.5 million tonnes of raw sugar, but it only delivered some 960,000 tonnes.

Cuba's sugar cane harvest failed last season and the country produced only 4.2 million tonnes of sugar instead of the usual 6-7 million tonnes. According to foreign experts' estimates, taking into account the acceleration of the Cuban economy's collapse, this year Cuba will produce only about 3.5 million tonnes, even if it were to effect a total mobilization.

There will be more delays, more innuendos, more hushing up, and more semisecret talks when one set of figures is announced and another set appears in agreements. This will persist until such time as both sides engage in an honest and above-the-board game, declaring all their potential, their rights and obligations, the amounts that are owed, and the schedule for their repayment.

Plane Crew Flees Sudan After 3 Weeks in Jail

LD2812181593 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1700 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] An An-12 aircraft with a Russian crew leased by Sudan for carrying food inside the country took off from Khartoum airport without the permission of air traffic control and landed, after a short flight, in the southern Egyptian town of Luxor. Today's Egyptian newspapers report that the 12-man Russian crew came into conflict with the Sudanese authorities owing to nonpayment of their salaries due to them for several months. Evidently the conflict was so acute that the aviators spent three weeks in the local jail and decided on this adventure after their release. At present, consultations are being held between the Egyptian and Sudanese Foreign Ministries. According to the Russian consul in Sudan, ITAR-TASS reports, similar incidents can be expected with other such crews working there.

Security Ministry Aide on Foreign Intelligence Activity

PM2812121593 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 3

[Interview with Major General Veniamin Vladimirovich Kashirskikh, deputy chief of the Security Ministry Counterintelligence Directorate, by Stanislav Bartnikas; place and date not given: "Russia Has Become a Mecca for Spies"]

[Text] Counterintelligence agents are furtive people. In recent years not one journalist has managed to obtain an interview with them. But literally just a few days before Yeltsin's edict, your KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA correspondent talked with Major General Veniamin Vladimirovich Kashirskikh, deputy chief of the Security Ministry Counterintelligence Directorate.

[Bartnikas] Quite recently Western special services called Moscow and indeed the USSR an especially dangerous place for their resident agents—largely thanks to the strenuous work of Soviet counterintelligence. Would you say that their work has become easier nowadays?

[Kashirskikh] Thanks to the foreign special services an image of Soviet counterintelligence as something of an ogre was formed in the West over several decades. The slightest pretext was used to discredit it. On the other hand the fact that they feared us may be taken as a compliment. The people working in counterintelligence have always been highly skilled specialists who in the course of their professional duty used to pose certain problems for foreign intelligence agents.

Is it easier for intelligence agents to work in Russia nowadays? Probably so. Society and the state have changed and people have become more liberated.... Political and economic contacts are expanding, efforts are being pooled in the sphere of scientific research, and there is a search for common views on military-strategic problems in progress. All these things do, of course, create additional opportunities for foreign intelligence agents to use new forms and methods of work in our country. For the first time in many years intelligence officers have emerged from the shadows, so to speak.

A partnership is now developing between Russian special services and the intelligence and counterintelligence services of other states for the purpose of protecting the world community against the illegal traffic in the components and technologies of mass destruction weapons, the narcotics business, and international terrorism. This is of great significance. But this partnership certainly does not mean that these special services are no longer being monitored by counterintelligence or that their work has become easier.

[Bartnikas] However, their activity has changed in some ways, has it not? What methods do U.S. intelligence agents use nowadays, for instance?

[Kashirskikh] A characteristic feature of the activity of foreign intelligence agents in Russia now is that they are constantly accusing our special services, albeit without very much evidence, of all-out aggressiveness and even a certain high-handedness [totalnost, nastupatelnost i dazhe nekotoraya bestseremonnost]. The easing of the administrative regime and the legal nihilism have created favorable conditions for intelligence officers. The methods change little, after all. The agent's work and the use of special technical facilities have always been and will remain decisive in the activity of any special service. No one has devised anything new yet, but the scale of the activity of foreign intelligence agents is expanding, which means that we cannot relax our efforts.

[Bartnikas] Have special services appeared in Russia which previously were unknown here?

[Kashirskikh] Yes!

[Bartnikas] Are you observing signs of activity from the CIS republics in the creation of agent networks on Russian territory?

[Kashirskikh] That is a sensitive question. For the time being let us leave that to the consciences of those who are violating accords that have been reached.

[Bartnikas] It is well known that around Russia—on the territory of yesterday's socialist camp "brothers" and in the former Union republics—new Western stations are being formed. How serious is this?

[Kashirskikh] We know that some Western special services reacted very quickly to the changed situation in the countries of the former Eastern bloc and in the states of the collapsed Union. In some places they established control and systematically set about reorienting toward Russia the intelligence work of their new partners. They are training people for the newly formed special services and are using the new territories in their own interests. The appearance of diplomatic missions in the republics of the former USSR has provided a good opportunity for the creation of new stations or operations groups. In addition, previously untried covers for intelligence agents are being developed, in the mass media, for example, or in commercial structures.

[Bartnikas] How many and what kind of agents and agent networks have been neutralized recently? Has it been possible to avoid deep infiltration by such an agency [izbezhat glubokogo vnedreniya etoy agentury]?

[Kashirskikh] I am not going to judge the results of our work in terms of the number of agents arrested and stations exposed. If I say that a given number of people are now under investigation that will add little to an understanding of the real picture. It is important that the system of counterintelligence measures in use now makes it possible to monitor the operations of foreign intelligence services and channel them in a direction necessary and advantageous to us. Exposure is by no means always politically or operationally justified.

The important thing now it to protect the interests of the state and society and the rights of the individual. Counterintelligence agents tend more to direct their efforts toward preventive and explanatory work with people so as to warn them of possible violations of the law. Such work is already yielding results, and many people have been able to avoid harsh consequences for themselves.

[Bartnikas] Have there been instances of spies being caught in the Security Ministry itself?

[Kashirskikh] Regrettably yes. Special services rivalry and an intellectual struggle are in progress, and our staffers are at the center of it. There have also been losses, but these should be viewed professionally.

[Bartnikas] By all accounts it is not very difficult to recruit the ordinary Russian nowadays. Which of our fellow citizens are "hooked" most often—people who possess secrets but who have fallen on hard times, people with unwanted scientific potential, or representatives of the army as it withdraws from different regions?

[Kashirskikh] To use your terminology, those who have been "hooked" fall into the first, second, and third categories. And, most distressing of all, people with access to information of state importance. You get the impression that some officials regard the changes in the world as an era of universal brotherhood. As far as they are concerned the foreigner—be he trader, diplomat, or intelligence agent—is an undiluted source of income to whom they will give all the information he wants for a few dollars or the chance of a trip abroad. Any firm in the West and in our country too begins its activity by creating a security service and devising measures to protect its commercial secrets. But in the state structures it seems few people are bothered about that nowadays, and you get the feeling that everything is up for sale.

It seems that foreigners can be given access to the plans of the country's leadership or new scientific developments of strategic importance and at the same time be asked for advice on questions of reducing the Russian armed forces or reforming the security organs so that they don't tread on anyone's toes....

[Bartnikas] In the past one of the main areas of the Western special services' activity was the targeted discrediting of the structures and representatives of power. Do you see that kind of work going on today?

[Kashirskikh] That is not the most relevant task for the special services today. The Western countries are keen to support the democratic transformations taking place in Russia, including those at state level. I do not know of a single special service which would operate against its own government.

[Bartnikas] Is it our scientific and technical potential that interests them most of all?

[Kashirskikh] Yes, that is what the special services want first and foremost, especially since a good deal of scientific research information was recently declassified.

[Bartnikas] But there have been attempts not only to steal secrets but also to buy military technology, for example, have there not?

[Kashirskikh] To talk about planned operations to buy up military technologies would be unlawful: All sales of this kind are sanctioned by the Russian authorities after careful coordination with the interested departments and taking into account possible harm to Russian security.

There is another very dangerous aspect to this problem. Today some foreign special services have set up a real hunt for the foremost scientists and are using any means to get them out of Russia. We have managed to thwart many such actions, but the problem remains. The state must show greater concern for the country's scientific potential and create conditions conducive to the work of specialists and scientists.

[Bartnikas] Incidentally, has the number of secrets and classified installations in Russia increased or decreased?

[Kashirskikh] Classified information and installations are the responsibility of the departments in charge of the information in question. In accordance with the law "On the Federal Organs of State Security," the Security Ministry is responsible solely for "ensuring within the limits of its competence the safekeeping of the state secrets of the Russian Federation." This is a fundamental point.

Not many people know this but as regards the protection of information, departments have switched from the principle of "closed regions" to closed installations. Less than two percent of Russia's territory is off-limits to foreigners. A general review of secret information has been carried out for the purpose of reducing it.

[Bartnikas] What international terrorist formations have now extended their reach to Russia, and what are they up to?

[Kashirskikh] The fight against international terrorism does not fall within the counterintelligence bailiwick. But we are not standing aside, we are supporting the counterterrorist subunit which exists in the ministry.

And there are many problems in this area. Armed violence is becoming increasingly widespread. Statesmen and public and religious figures are often threatened with reprisals, there is growing fundamentalist terror, and acts of terrorism are being used by fascist-style ultrarightist groupings. There is a worrying possibility of terrorism resulting from the exacerbation of interethnic relations. State security organs have come across instances of threats to foreign citizens, and killings of foreign citizens too.

[Bartnikas] Does counterintelligence target political parties and movements whose activities could damage state security?

[Kashirskikh] These functions are not part of the counterintelligence mission.

[Bartnikas] But abrupt changes in political life must have some impact on the operations of the Security Ministry's Counterintelligence Directorate? Surely, whatever coups or putsches may occur, counterintelligence officers should ideally keep working without paying any particular attention to all this....

[Kashirskikh] I would be lying if I said that political and economic upheavals leave us indifferent. Moreover, they destabilize the situation among the operational staff. How can people work on quietly when rumors abound concerning the reforming—but, essentially, the breaking up [dezorganizatsiya]—of the Security Ministry?

You are quite right that counterintelligence officers—like any other Security Ministry staffers—should strictly follow the letter of the law. I can assure you that none of our officers would today take it upon himself to do anything out of line with the current legislation defining the organs' activities. We have learned from previous generations' bitter experience. But, equally, we should not have our hands tied by various incompetent legislative amendments or reformist ideas based on slogans about democratizing society.

Election Aftermath

Russia's Choice Faction Holds First Meeting

Composition of Faction Noted

LD2812121893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1144 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—The pro-Yeltsin Russia's Choice parliamentary group led by First Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar is the biggest in the State Duma and numbers 94 lawmakers, according to the "IZVESTIYA" newspaper.

43 of its members are Muscovites while 51 are from the provinces, it said on Tuesday [28 December] in its report from the first official meeting of the parliamentary group.

Earlier Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubays predicted that Russia's Choice, of which he is a member, would have 103 seats.

The "newcomers" of the bloc made it clear at the meeting that they are not going to unconditionally obey the "instructions" of the well-known members and will protect their own positions, according to "IZVESTIYA".

Although the Russia's Choice has the biggest faction in parliament it is still far from the necessary decision-voting 225 seats.

Initially the bloc planned to join efforts with the Yavlinskiy-Boldyrev-Lukin/Yabloko/group and the Party of Russian Unity and Accord of Sergey Shakhray.

However, the meeting was informed about Shakhray's intention to unite with communists, the conservative Agrarian Party and the centrist Democratic Party.

Thus the only possible ally for the Russia's Choice is the Yabloko, although relations with it are rather complicated. Still the Russia's Choice believes understanding can be reached with Yavlinsky in critical situations.

It was announced that Russia's Choice member Sergey Filatov decided to remain the head of the presidential administration and dropped his parliamentary mandate. Petr Aven, the former foreign trade minister, followed suit and decided to remain president of a commercial bank.

Yeltsin's aide Dmitriy Volkogonov is yet to decide whether to keep his post or work in parliament.

Gaydar Addresses Meeting

LD2812144393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] "Sixty-five of the ninety-four deputies attended the first meeting of Russia's Choice faction at the State Duma which took place on Monday [27 December] in Moscow," member of the Russia's Choice bloc executive committee, Arkadiy Murashev, told Interfax.

The meeting was addressed by Russia's Choice leader Yegor Gaydar, first vice premier of the government. Murashev said that on the bloc's request Gaydar had met with President Yeltsin about a week before and told him that the election results could be interpreted in an entirely different way; the people had expressed their dissatisfaction with the policy of radical reforms and therefore the reforms should be softened, or perhaps the people were dissatisfied with the inconsistent and indecisive manner in which the reforms were carried out

"The bloc's tactic," Murashev said, citing Gaydar's words, "will depend on the president's conclusions from the election results." In his opinion, the president will declare his stand in his speech at the opening of the new parliament on January 11.

Murashev noted that in the course of the talks between representatives of four major factions, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation had nominated Vladimir Isakov, a former People's Deputy of the Russian Federation and ex-leader of the opposition National Salvation Front, who "is absolutely unacceptable" for Russia's Choice.

The talks are in progress. Murashev believes that in all probability the sides will accept a representative of minor factions. He refuted the allegations that the candidacy of Vladimir Lukin, a representative of Yavlinskiy's bloc, as chairman of the State Duma had been agreed to by a number of factions, saying that Lukin's name had not even been mentioned in the official talks and in an informal talk was suggested among many others.

The faction's next meeting will take place on January 10 next year.

'Balance of Forces' Calculated

LD2812153493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1440 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] The Russia's Choice group in the new Russian parliament has calculated at its meeting Monday [27 December] the possible balance of forces in the lower house, Boris Zolotukhin, MP, told INTERFAX.

In his words, out of the 444 elected members 174 can be described as democratically-minded. They are members of Russia's Choice, Yavlinsky's bloc, and Russian Unity and Concord groups.

Their most probable opponents, the Liberal Democratic Party, Communist Party, Agrarian Party and Democratic Party groups and members of the Civic Union and Russia All-Popular Union, can count on 195 votes.

The Russia's Women group, which has taken up 21 seats, and the 75 independents have not declared their political sympathies yet, Zolotukhin said.

Russia's Choice Leadership Meets With Chernomyrdin

Chernomyrdin Supports Reform Policy

LD2812155193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1440 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told the leadership of the Russia's Choice electoral bloc on Monday [27 December] that any revision of the reform policy was out of the question, said an officer at the press service of First Deputy Premier Yegor Gaydar, who heads the bloc.

Quoting Gaydar, the officer told INTERFAX that Monday's meeting, which, in addition to Gaydar, was attended by Anatoliy Chubays, Boris Fedorov, Sergey Yushenkov, Gennadiy Burbulis and other leaders of Russia's Choice, focused on social and economic aspects of the reform program.

According to Gaydar, Russia's Choice leaders discussed their cooperation with the government at their meeting with Prime Minister Chernomyrdin on December 27.

"Our bloc did not make any ultimatum that our people be appointed to key positions. We want the financial and economic policy to comply with our principles and be pursued by people who share them, not necessarily Gaydar, Fyodorov and Chubays. We discussed these issues and our talks with the premier will be continued," Gaydar said.

Gaydar Comments

LD2812205393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1943 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] First Vice Premier Yegor Gaydar does not intend to resign "as long as I feel we are on a rational course." He told journalists in Moscow Tuesday [28 December] that there were no signs thus far that this is not the case.

Asked by Interfax, Gaydar said that on December 27, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin had stated in "tough and unequivocal" terms that there would be no revision in government policy.

Gaydar, who leads the Russia's Choice bloc, said that even though the present government was essentially a coalition, "there is a consensus that the course should not change. ... I strongly object to people who do not share the position of the government (rather than objecting to those who are against Russia's Choice) and believe they should leave the government. These people have seats in parliament."

He agreed that "the situation is complicated and it will be difficult to carry the governmental program through." But things were no easier last September, he thinks.

What happened then was a sharp conflict between parliament and the president, "an increasing power vacuum, a political crisis was in the offing." Now, unlike in September, we have a Constitution "which specifies the framework of power sharing and the president has the right to veto."

In the words of Gaydar, the reform group in the new parliament is stronger than in the previous one. "At that time democrats could only shout in parliament occasionally but now we can, with the aid of the presidential veto, block most irresponsible decisions dangerous for the country," Gaydar said.

Russia's Choice Seeks Support of Yavlinskiy Bloc

LD2812134993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1252 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Ivantsov]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—A noted member of the pro-Yeltsin Russia's Choice parliamentary group signalled on Tuesday [28 December] that his bloc is set to recruit noted economist Grigoriy Yavlinskiy and his Yabloko bloc as an ally in the new Russian parliament despite all criticisms coming from the latter.

"Despite the remaining different viewpoints on the ways of implementing the privatisation programme in Russia I regard Grigoriy Yavlinskiy as a responsible politician", privatisation supremo Anatoliy Chubays told a press conference on Tuesday.

Chubays, who is also a deputy prime minister, admitted that Yavlinskiy had bitterly criticised his privatisation policy saying that some of its provisions were inadmissible.

Now that six months remain before the privatisation programme is over "neither Grigoriy Yavlinsky nor his party will raise the question in parliament about the cancellation of privatisation by vouchers", Chubays said.

"That is why I am absolutely sure that contradictions with Grigoriy Yavlinskiy are now not of political, but of professional character and I am ready to defend my point of view in professional atmosphere", Chubays said.

He quoted latest opinion polls as saying that 62 per cent of Russians supported his privatization programme.

Chubays informed that some 70 per cent of small and medium ventures have been privatised so far and 11,000 out of 14.5 thousand major enterprises had floated capital.

"The analysis of privatisation process this year gives grounds for a conclusion that it has become irreversible in Russia", Chubays said.

Party of Russian Unity Discusses Parliamentary Tactics

LD2812180293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1634 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Belskiy]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—The Russian parliament members representing the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES) have proposed to open the first session of the Federal Assembly with approving its formal procedure, electing a speaker and forming committees. This proposal was formulated at the faction meeting held here today.

The faction declared impermissible attempts to draw independent deputies into one or another party faction, but advocated the right of deputies to form territorial or occupational groupings.

The faction announced its intention to insist on the right of each of the two parliament chambers to form an independent compact staff.

The faction also announced that it would preserve its "organizational and political independence" in the State Duma. Along with this, deputies from PRES are prepared to cooperate with all deputies who act from positions of Russian unity and accord, as well as for purposes of pushing through the parliament bills on specific issues.

Chances of LDPR Split Discussed

MK2912130093 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 29 Dec 93 p 2

[Gleb Chebotarev report in the "Scandal" column: "Andrey Zavidiya Demands LDPR Repay Debt. Zhirinovskiy's Deputy Says They Did Not Borrow Any Money"]

[Text] Against the backdrop of the overwhelming majority of Russian political formations, where splits and conflicts between leaders are quite commonplace and usual, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR] has stood apart in its amazing unity of ranks and a complete absence of apparent internal squabbling. The two splits that happened in the LDPR (at the time when it was still called the Liberal Democratic Party of the Soviet Union) in 1990 as the party was just emerging, were left outside broad public attention because at that time Mr. Zhirinovskiy and his party belonged to a partisan class of exotics. Furthermore, the LDPR has practically always been a one-man party. The established tradition was upset last week. Andrey Zavidiya, president of the Galand concern, who was Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's running mate in the 1991 presidential elections and after the August coup became co-founder and sponsor of SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, filed through ITAR-TASS channels a statement announcing his break with the LDPR. The statement points to Mr. Zhirinovskiy's inappropriate behavior which manifested itself in Andrey Zavidiya's deletion from the LDPR election slate. Alleging that both election campaigns were financed by Galand, Mr. Zavidiya expressed his intention to stop any payments to the LDPR and to demand the recovery of the debts in court. Furthermore, according to Zavidiya, his supporters, who constitute between 60 and 70 percent of the party and half the candidates list, will soon begin to quit the LDPR.

Stanislav Zhebrovskiy, LDPR deputy chairman and chief editor of the party newspaper PRAVDA ZHIRINOVSKOGO, described Mr. Zavidiya as "an inconsistent politician and possibly also an inconsistent businessman" and also as a "person who is trying to show off," and tried to disprove the statement made by the Galand president.

According to Mr. Zhebrovskiy, there can be no question about the LDPR's failing to fulfill its obligations to Zavidiya; rather the opposite could be alleged. Mr. Zhebrovskiy did not wish to specify the nature of the accords between the LDPR and Galand. He stated, however, that "Zavidiya did not implement any of his obligations; he has not been seen anywhere and his people did not participate in the signature-raising campaign."

In assessing the number of Mr. Zavidiya's supporters, Mr. Zhebrovskiy displayed a certain inconsistency. Saying that, on one hand, "there are no Zavidiya people in the party," he complained in the same breath about their weak activity in the election campaign. Mr. Zhebrovskiy denied Andrey Zavidiya's claims of support by the party majority, noting that in that event "he would long have been party chairman of a member of the Duma. People at any congress would have voted and he would have become party chairman, but he has never been elected at any level." Taking about the possibility of a split within the LDPR and its Duma faction, Stanislav Zhebrovskiy compared it to the probability of "Moscow falling through as a result of an earthquake." "The party is united and monolithic, and the signature-raising campaign has shown that the whole of the party has been working and has felt its strength." According to Mr. Zhebrovskiy, any talk about a possible split within the LDPR can be attributed to "Mr. Zavidiya's wish to be a kind of prophet."

Stanislav Zhebrovskiy stated that the LDPR did not even count on Mr. Zavidiya's financial assistance. "There has never been any conversation with him about any funds being made available. We simply know that he has none," Mr. Zhebrovskiy said, admitting, however, that he "does not know either about his concern or its real possibilities." Mr. Zhebrovskiy once again reaffirmed that donations to the party's treasury have come from the entire nation: "We are being helped by average Russian citizens. Everyone is helping to the best of his ability." The LDPR deputy chairman, however, concluded that the party "would like to have more funds."

Mr. Zhebrovskiy was optimistic about Mr. Zavidiya's threat to file a debt recovery suit. "I want him to sue; then, if he has the money, he will have to pay the expenses."

Factions Seen Avoiding 'Drastic Steps'

MK2812110093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Ivan Rodin report under the "Parliament" rubric: "Factions Decided Nearly Unanimously To Hold the First Federal Assembly Session in the Kremlin. Leaders of State Duma Parties and Blocs Demonstrate Ability To Consolidate in Closed-Door Talks"]

[Text] On Saturday, the Central Electoral Commission finally announced the final results of the party vote. Out of the 225 seats to be allocated to electoral associations, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR] won the greatest share, 59 seats. "Russia's Choice" came in second with 40 seats. The communists [RFCP] will have 32 seats, the Agrarian Party of Russia [APR] and "Women of Russia" have 21 seats each, "Yabloko," 20; the Party of Russian Unity and Accord [PRUA], 18; and the Democratic Party of Russia [DPR] closes the list with 14 seats. It has repeatedly been emphasized that these figures do not mean anything, because the factions will be reinforced by deputies elected in territorial districts. "Russia's Choice" still claims that it is going to have the largest faction, of at least 100 deputies. To all appearances, the communists, the agrarians, and the liberal democrats will become the State Duma's other "pillars."

In all, apparently there will be nine factions and a deputy group of "independents" in the lower chamber. The Duma factions have already begun preparations—technically under the supervision of the presidential administration, whose chief, Sergey Filatov, has officially renounced a deputy seat. The first meeting of the organizing committee for preparing the new parliament's first session was held on 24 December in the Kremlin. It was attended by virtually all leaders, who, according to reports from reliable sources, expressed their bewilderment at Mr. Filatov's chairing the meeting. With some difficulties and after some lunch breaks, the deputies managed to get rid of the presence of the presidential administration.

The conference was held in a constructive spirit, and the aforementioned sources point to a careful and constructive stance by the opposition, particularly the RFCP. They decided to insist on holding the first meeting of the Federal Assembly in the Kremlin. No candidates for the post of speaker have been named yet, but an agreement that the post will not be held by representatives of any of the large factions has in principle been achieved. On the whole, it was decided to minimize the importance of the office, something which, as a matter of fact, the Commission for Legislative Proposals under State Duma deputy Mikhail Mityukov had already taken care of in the draft rules of procedure. Representative of various blocs tip Vladimir Lukin, or even Alevtina Fedulova, as a possible State Duma chairman, but at least they are opposed to Sergey Shakhray. Mr. Shakhray himself is aware of this; he told your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent that "Russia's Choice" had already reached agreement with the communists, agrarians, women, and "Yabloko" that Shakhray should not be allowed to become speaker. "Russia's Choice" understandably denied this charge, and a spokesman for the bloc said that, in his view, Shakhray simply started thinking up in advance reasons for his upcoming failure in the vote to elect a speaker.

"Russia's Choice," in turn, referred to the PRUA as a member of the "Big Four," together with the APR, RFCP, and DPR. To all appearances, all this talk has the sole purpose of frightening "Yabloko" and, possibly, "Women of Russia" so that they will find it easier to form a coalition with "Russia's Choice." Generally, hints have already been dropped as to the future shape of State Duma coalitions: For instance, Nikolay Travkin said in passing that the agrarians have always been the DPR's natural allies, and APR leader Mikhail Lapshin did not deny this.

It is worth noting that preparations for the future parliament's meetings have been conducted as carefully as possible and with minimum publicity. This is characteristic of both the parliamentarians and the presidential administration. It is clear that they do not have any secrets between them, but the press, and hence the voters, are being kept at arm's length. Only Boris Yeltsin's press service reported on the Friday meeting of the organizing committee, but in fairly careful language. According to reports from confidential sources, all factions except the pro-presidential one have decided to adopt tactics of carefully pressuring the president both on the subject of the State Duma's residence and on the president's address upon opening the first State Duma meeting. In particular, faction leaders agree that not only should Mr. Yeltsin read out his opening address, but deliver a keynote speech "for 40 minutes or so." Although almost everyone had dwelled on the need to form a new government during the election campaign, there have been no specific steps taken so far, while the government is being reformed according to Boris Yeltsin's promises and under his edicts.

The deputies, with fresh memories of last October's lessons, do not appear to be planning any drastic steps, at least at the initial stage of their activity. According to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA sources, all factions agree that they should try to squeeze as much as possible from this Duma and, therefore, to keep it intact as long as possible. As a matter of fact, the Kremlin as a State Duma seat is an important tool of keeping it intact: Shelling behind the Kremlin wall is simply unimaginable.

Further Reaction to Election Results Reported

Arithmetic in Results Questioned

PM2812141793 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Viktor Trushkov report: "What Happened to a Million Russians? Central Electoral Commissions Arithmetical Puzzles"]

[Text] Last Saturday the Central Electoral Commission published the official results of the nationwide vote on the draft Constitution of the Russian Federation. It "determined that 58,187,755 registered voters, or 54.8 percent, had taken part in the nationwide vote.

"The number of people voting for the Russian Federation Constitution was 32,937,630—or 58.4 percent of the turnout.

"The number of people voting against the Russian Federation Constitution was 23,431,333—or 41.6 percent of the turnout...."

Later on in the decree come phrases that were first read out by Vice Premier V. Shumeyko at a time when the ballot papers at a number of polling places had scarcely been emptied out of their ballot boxes (remember the farcical TV "political new year" meeting on election night). Everything is seemingly part of the "official protocol." But it does not square with basic arithmetic. The Central Electoral Commission is suggesting that its fellow countrymen solve a number of entertaining grade-school problems.

Problem One. How many voters voted?

Let's start by adding it up. The number of people voting for the Constitution was 58.4 percent of the "turnout," while 41.6 percent voted against. So, 58.4 + 41.6 = 100.0. To find the total number of voters you have to add those who supported the draft to those who opposed it. The figure of 58.4 percent represents 32,937,630 voters. Add to that 23,431,333 voters (or 41.6 percent). The total is 56,368,963 voters. But the Central Electoral Commission claims that the number of people who "took part in the nationwide vote" was "58 million...." That is a miscount, esteemed tellers, and a big one—1,818,792 people.

Problem Two. What was the proportion of people supporting the new Constitution?

Let us nonetheless accept that over 58 million people took part in the vote and that electoral commissions were unable to establish the position of almost 2 million of them. It is well known that around 33 million people said "yes" to the draft. So this means that the proportion of people supporting the new Constitution was 32,937,630 divided by 58,187,755 times 100 = 56.6 percent. It turns out that the Central Electoral Commission has "overcharged" us by almost 2 percent.

Problem Three. How many voters are there in Russia?

The Central Electoral Commission "determined" that 54.8 percent of voters turned out. If 100 percent of those who voted is made up of those who said "yes" and "no" to the Constitution, then it turns out that slightly more than 102,863,000 voters were on the rolls. If more people took part in the vote—over 58 million according to the Central Electoral Commission's "determination"—then there were 106,182,000 voters on the rolls. But at the first news conference after the vote Central Electoral Commission Chairman N. Ryabov gave a third figure—105,284,000. It was decided not to make any mention of this baseline figure for the calculation of the results in the official decree on the referendum results. So just how many voters are there in Russia?

Problem Four. Clarifications or postscripts?

The day after the vote the Central Electoral Commission already knew that 55,987,000 voters had taken part in the referendum, and the public was informed of this. Out of this number, 29,337,000 advocated adopting the Constitution. It turns out that, according to the initial figures, the draft was not supported by 55,987,000 minus 29,337,000 = 26,650,000. After searching through corn bins and sweeping out barns it was possible to find almost 58,188,000 people who voted. An increase of approximately 2.2 million. The increase in the number of "voters who took part" led to the Constitution receiving the backing—if the document signed by N. Ryabov and V. Zagulyayev is to be believed—of almost 32,938,000. In the space of 12 days the increase in the number of supporters of Yeltsin's Fundamental Law came to...3.6 million people. It turns out that during the counting process the number of people who failed to support the Constitution on their ballot papers steadily fell every day. As a result, it fell by at least 1.4 million voters (?!). Moscow circus conjurors are envious.

Problem Five. The most worrying point.

There were less than eight months between the April and December referenda. In April 1993 the total number of citizens entitled to take part in the nationwide vote was officially set at 107,310,000. By the end of the year there were a maximum of 106,182,000 of these fellow citizens in Russia. So what happened to more than 1.13 million adult Russians? Did they die of poverty? Were they killed by the criminals who were the first to master the delights of the market? Could their hearts not withstand the joy inspired by the draft new Constitution? Or should the answers be sought not in tragedies but in trickery?

Our attempts to elicit some clear answers to these questions from the Central Electoral Commission have not yet met with success.

Adamishin Views Zhirinovskiy's Success

BR2812141393 Milan L'ESPRESSO in Italian 26 Dec 93 p43

[Interview with First Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoliy Adamishin by Mauro De Bonis; place and date not given: "The Monster Is Also Your Fault"]

[Text] "One thing is certain. The elections have brought home to those governing Russia, that is President Yeltsin and his men, that the people are tired. Look at the numbers. Almost half the population completely deserted the ballot box. And of those who did decide to go and vote, the majority has favored the candidate who knew, more than others, how to appeal to the discontent, fear, and uncertainty of a people which is badly fed, badly clothed, and uncertain of its future."

Anatoliy Adamishin, deputy foreign minister and former ambassador in Rome, has made his decision. In the next parliament, free Russia's first, he too will be there, elected by the bloc headed by economist Grigoriy Yavlinskiy which achieved 7 percent of the vote. In this interview with L'ESPRESSO, he gives an initial analysis of the post-election situation, and tries to place the "Zhirinovskiy" phenomenon in perspective, both from the viewpoint of a Russia which is to a large extent incredulous at his success, and from that of a democratic West, which Adamishin does not spare severe criticism.

[De Bonis] Minister, what, in your opinion, is the Russia which voted for Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party?

[Adamishin] In short, discontented Russia. For you Italians, it should be easy to judge and analyze this phenomenon. What is happening in your country is similar to what has happened in Russia. In all times of change, in particular when the people are discontented, we find parties such as Zhirinovskiy's appearing, promising to change everything for the best, rapidly, and without any great effort. For 70 years, the principal motto was: "Give us." If you then get somebody who tells you: "I'll give you everything, including cheap vodka and sausages," millions of people are ready to believe him.

[De Bonis] This extremist nationalist vote is therefore linked only to "material" problems.

[Adamishin] Not at all. You Westerners have also fueled the Zhirinovskiy phenomenon, because he has been able to take advantage of the humiliating position into which the so-called democratic world has constricted Russia. The response which was hoped for on the first months' wave of euphoria, when enjoying the freedom from totalitarian chains, has turned out very weak.

[De Bonis] In what sense?

[Adamishin] In the sense that your support for Russia has been and still is uncertain. Take for example the case of the Council of Europe. For two years Russia has been kept waiting to be admitted. A humiliating procedure. Meanwhile, countries are allowed to join like Estonia, which, in our view, does not have many more rights than we do and which, among other things, is certainly not a clear example of democracy, in particular when it comes to the treatment of Russians in their country. But the Europeans pretend not to understand and say that democracy in Estonia will improve with time. I repeat: This treatment is humiliating to us, and allows a man like Zhirinovskiy to turn patriotic sentiment—a thing which, in recent years, was viewed as blasphemy—to his advantage.

[De Bonis] To what extent, in your opinion, is the Liberal Democratic Party's victory due to the fragmentation of the reformist area?

[Adamishin] Differences of opinion among the democratic forces are more numerous than among the opposition. The opposition has availed itself of a common denominator: discontent. What the others have to do, on the other hand, is to choose the right way of governing and continuing the reforms. Coming to your question, I believe that, in any case, these differing visions have, to a certain measure, facilitated Zhirinovskiy's victory.

[De Bonis] But naturally, there is more...

[Adamishin] Yes, for example, the euphoria of the democratic forces, who believed that they had won even before the vote. But neither would I rule out personal motives, the desire of many candidates to grab the limelight, each with his own little party, leaving the creation of coalition blocs till later.

[De Bonis] What is the message people sent via the vote?

[Adamishin] Over and above the assent given to Zhirinovskiy, the signal is that there is a need to correct the economic policies adopted hitherto. Objectively, one has to say that the margins for correction are very limited, but there is a chance to totally review certain areas like social policy. These young boys managing our country's economy, Gaydar and Shakhray, have been a little too closed to criticism. Certainly it needed courage to break everything in a gigantic country like ours, but their presumptuousness can now become dangerous.

[De Bonis] Should we therefore fear for Russia's immediate future? And will Boris Yeltsin succeed in reaching the end of his mandate in June 1996?

[Adamishin] I believe that the chances are high that the president will reach the end of his mandate. First and foremost, owing to the very fear raised by the avalanche of assent to Zhirinovskiy. And to tranquilize our Western friends, I would remind them that both domestic and foreign policy are solidly in the government's and the president's hands. Speaking cynically, both Yeltsin and the head of the government can do without the Duma (the lower house of parliament) in governing the country, in particular if it proves to be only an instrument of obstruction. But they can use it as

an opportunity for discussion and correction. It is no mere chance that the word "Duma" derives from the verb "dumat," which means "to think."

[De Bonis] Finally, what is all this fear of Zhirinovskiy?

[Adamishin] A fear which I believe to be excessive. Even if I criticise his authoritarian character, the new Constitution is in fact a good deterrent against the Zhirinovskiy phenomenon. Moreover, I believe that his electoral fortunes are only temporary.

[De Bonis] But...

[Adamishin] But we need things to change for the better. And you, Westerners, must also make a committment. You need to understand once and for all that Europe's destiny does not lie in an enlargement of NATO, but in Russia becoming a truly democratic country. You supported the bombardment of parliament because you were aware that we have a common destiny, but the democratic "stratum" in Russia, as the elections have demonstrated, is very thin, and if you continue your policy of encirclement and continue to play with us with half ayes and half a no, then you too will risk having to reckon with a Zhirinovskiy. A Zhirinovskiy who can only improve the figures of your arms industry.

Missile Forces Deny Reports of Pro-Zhirinovskiy Vote

LD2812161193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1535 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—The press group of the Russian strategic missile forces today issued a statement to deny "incompetent reports" in the media that most of the voters in these forces had cast their ballots in favour of ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and his party in the December 12 parliamentary elections.

The press group says about 99 percent of the strategic force servicemen turned out for elections at open polling stations, and it was practically impossible to determine who voted for whom at such stations.

As concerns closed polling stations, at which only servicemen voted, they were set up mainly in units deployed outside Russia. Only one per cent of all the strategic force personnel went to such stations. In fact, the Central Electoral Commission received reports about the results of elections from these stations, which cannot be regarded as representing the total strategic force. No other data concerning the results of elections in which the personnel of the strategic missile forces took part exist or can exist, the statement said.

The press group said the publication of distorted information in some media was clearly intended "to compromise the Russian army".

Lukyanov Elected Coordinator of Assembly Commission

LD2812152793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1420 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Former USSR Supreme Soviet chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov, a newly elected State Duma member, has been elected on Monday [27 December] coordinator of one of the five working commissions of the Federal Assembly's organizing committee. That commission will work on procedures of the parliamentary groups in the lower house of the Russian parliament.

A commission member, who wished to remain anonymous, told Interfax that Lukyanov was nominated by Vengerovskiy, one of the Liberal Democratic Party leaders. The other nomination was Gennadiy Burbulis, one of Russia's Choice leaders. In a show of hands, Lukyanov won one vote more than Burbulis.

The commission member also said that Yekaterina Lakhova, a member of the Russia's Women group and the president's adviser, voted for Lukyanov. The commission will discuss at its Wednesday meeting a bill on parliamentary groups.

Lukyanov, who is one of the accused in the trial of the 1991 coup plotters, had pneumonia recently.

Political Issues

Presidential Edict on Government Reorganization Published

PM2812125593 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Presidential edict No. 2277 "On the Transformation and Reorganization of the Council of Ministers-Government of the Russian Federation," signed by President Boris Yeltsin and dated 23 December]

[Text] Edict of the President of the Russian Federation

On the Transformation and Reorganization of the Council of Ministers-Government of the Russian Federation

In connection with the adoption of the Constitution of the Russian Federation by nationwide vote on 12 December 1993 and the need to bring the structures of executive power of the Russian Federation into line with its provisions, I decree:

1. That the Council of Ministers-Government of the Russian Federation shall be transformed into the Government of the Russian Federation.

2. That V.S. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Council of Ministers-Government of the Russian Federation, shall within two weeks present proposals on:

changing the personnel of the Government of the Russian Federation with a view to effecting a substantial

reduction in the numerical composition of the Government of the Russian Federation;

transforming some the state committees of the Russian Federation into ministries of the Russian Federation;

reducing the number of ministries, state committees, and other departments of the Russian Federation with a view first and foremost to abolishing those ministries, state committees, and other departments which duplicate the functions of others and are intended for the management of spheres not regarded under the Constitution of the Russian Federation as being in the domain of the Russian Federation.

3. That within one month, V.S. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Council of Ministers-Government of the Russian Federation, shall:

reduce (by at least 20 percent) the apparatus of the Council of Ministers-Government of the Russian Federation;

and define the procedure for cooperation between the apparatus of the Council of Ministers-Government of the Russian Federation and ministries, state committees, and other departments of the Russian Federation.

4. The present edict shall go into force from the moment of its signing apart from point one, which shall go into force from the moment of the entry into force of the Constitution of the Russian Federation adopted in the nationwide vote 12 December 1993.

[Signed] B. Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, The Kremlin, Moscow
[Dated] 23 December 1993, Edict No. 2277

Shumeyko Comments on Restructuring

LD2912105893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1037 GMT 29 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Moscow December 29 TASS—Russia is going to transform its state committees into ministries and their total number will not exceed 30, according to First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko who held a press conference on Wednesday [29 December] the government restructuring draft programme.

President Boris Yeltsin had earlier promised major cuts in government personnel and a restructuring of the government.

Currently there are 22 federal ministries and 11 state committees in the country.

Shumeyko said the role of federal ministers will be substantially enhanced.

"Work on a new structure of the Russian Government has on the whole been completed," he stressed adding that a corresponding draft document will be submitted for presidential endorsement before January 6.

"In light of the rapid stratification of Russian society into rich and poor sections," Shumeyko noted, "the government has drafted a new taxation system. It envisages higher taxes for the wealthy and the use of the obtained finances in the interests of the less well-to-do strata or their transfer to the federal budget".

Commenting on new appointments in mass media, Shumeyko described Aleksandr Yakovlev, recently appointed to head the committee for television and radio broadcasting as "an advocate of Russian statehood, as a man who is, in fact, a national asset".

He also welcomed the decision to appoint Boris Mironov as chairman of the press committee and described him as "a man from among new politicians".

Shumeyko Against Coalition Cabinet

LD2912123693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1135 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] The upcoming reorganization of the cabinet least of all requires consulting the State Duma on its composition, Russian Vice-Premier Vladimir Shumeyko, a Federation Council member, has declared. Answering a question from an Interfax correspondent at a news conference on Wednesday [29 December], he emphasized that the reorganization would be purely structural without an attempt to set up a coalition government. "There virtually are no candidates for the sack," Shumeyko said. In his words, necessary consultations on the issue have actually been completed. By January 6, a new structure is to be submitted to the president who is to decide with the premier on ministerial appointments.

As for the State Duma, it is entitled by the constitution to voice no confidence in the entire cabinet, but, in his opinion, is unlikely to begin its work with that. "One should not add weight to the Duma, which is merely the lower house to deal with economics." He said that since "174 parliamentary seats belong to the democrats and 190 to the rest, the situation should not be dramatized." "They will probably engage in confrontation in the lower house, so, let them talk," Shumeyko said. But there is also the Parliament's Upper House, empowered to endorse legislation, and the President, entitled to veto it, he noted.

Speaking about the Federation Council, the Parliament's Upper House, Shumeyko urged paying much attention to the formation of a conference commission to resolve differences between the two houses over laws, which, by the constitution, are passed by the Lower House and endorsed by the Upper House. Shumeyko described the Federation Council members as highly qualified people, 67% of whom are local administrators.

Chernomyrdin Proposes New Position

LD2812130893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 28 Dec 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The behavior of some military chiefs during the October events in Moscow and the fact that military units voted for Zhirinovskiy's party have forced Russia's leadership to think about transformation in the military sphere. According to information obtained by the Intersept agency, Viktor Chernomyrdin proposed that the post of vice premier in charge [kurator] of power structures be introduced to the Cabinet of Ministers. There have been other proposals as well. In particular, the president has recommended reorganizing the running of the armed forces by reducing the defense minister's and his deputies' influence on the army troops and by linking control [of the army] directly to the the president, who is the supreme commander in chief, via the General Staff.

Golushko on Security Ministry Reorganization

PM2812162193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Dec 93 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Federal Counterintelligence Service Director Nikolay Golushko by Valeriy Yakov in Moscow; date not given: "Total Number of Chekists in Russia Unknown, But It Will Be Reduced by One-Third by the New Year"]

[Text] For several days following the signing of the presidential edict abolishing the Ministry of Security, IZVESTIYA's correspondents tried to get in touch with the leadership of the former Ministry of Security and the new Federal Counterintelligence Service [FCS] (especially since they are the same persons) to obtain some comment on the edict and details about it. But the Chekists stubbornly refused to establish contact. It was only after the conclusion of Operation Nabat to free the Rostov schoolchildren from the terrorists—and staffers of the already abolished Ministry of Security played an active part in the operation—that IZVESTIYA's correspondent caught up with FCS Director Nikolay Golushko at the government headquarters and asked him several questions.

[Yakov] Nikolay Mikhaylovich, please tell us what form will the Ministry of Security's transformation into the FCS take?

[Golushko] We are busy formulating the FCS's structure and tasks. As a matter of fact, this is being done not just by ourselves, specialists are also involved. Let me be frank: We also have written instructions from the president on this matter.

You know that the edict set a deadline of two weeks for this work. One week has already gone. And I think that our proposals will be ready by the New Year.

[Yakov] If the new service's functions will cover only counterintelligence, who will tackle the struggle against terrorism, cases similar to the one in Rostov?

[Golushko] You are probably familiar with the catchphrase "If you want to reduce work efficiency, launch a reorganization." This is what is happening in this case, but I think that the standard of each staffer's professional and civic duty will make it possible to restore the full potential in the very near future.

Moreover I am duty bound to emphasize: The Ministry of Security never was the KGB. It was set up two years ago on completely new legal principles, and many people left after 1991, including some who did not leave of their own free will. But the main point is that, during this period, the Ministry of Security started for the first time operating on the basis of the law—the Law on Federal Security Organs and Operational-Investigative Activity. Therefore, the image of our operational staffers changed psychologically, methodologically, and professionally. Including the image of those who had spent many years working in the organs, being trained in the spirit of obedience to the law and responsibility.

[Yakov] What lies in store for the numerous administrations which were part of the Ministry of Security but will not be included in the counterintelligence structure?

[Golushko] Virtually all of our subdivisions worked along the lines of counterintelligence.

[Yakov] But will staff numbers be reduced?

[Golushko] Yes, by at least 30 percent.

[Yakov] And where will the redundant staffers go?

[Golushko] I think that some people will be transferred to other structures. If we are left with a purely special service, then our investigators, for example, will be transferred to the Military Prosecutor's Office or the internal affairs organs. People will not be left without work.

[Yakov] What lies in store for the Border Guard Troops?

[Golushko] For the time being, our conceptual plans envisage that the Border Guard Troops, just like our own service, will be directly subordinate to the president. Whenever operational tasks to protect the border are being performed, the border guard troops commander will also be subordinate to the director of counterintelligence—bearing in mind these troops' specific nature.

[Yakov] Just two days before abolishing the Ministry of Security, the president issued another edict awarding the rank of general to 27 of your officers. Will these generals remain in counterintelligence, or were they awarded this rank as a consolation prize before retirement?

[Golushko] No, why a consolation prize? There are young staffers among them, they still have a long service ahead of them.

[Yakov] And how do you personally appraise the abolition edict, was its promulgation justified or was it signed on the spur of the moment?

[Golushko] You know, this could be approached philosophically. On the one hand, there is a completely new

political and social situation in the country, a new Constitution. On the other hand—this tough reformation, and a very harsh preamble as well.... At least, in the wake of the October events, I personally would not make such sharp movements. I do not condemn the president, I obey, and we are actually doing everything to implement the edict. But in this instance I am talking about the purely human feelings of honest staffers.

[Yakov] Do you not think that it was actually the October events that convinced the president that he could no longer rely on the Ministry of Security?

[Golushko] I think that all explanations can be read in the actual preamble to the edict.

[Yakov] Has there been an increase in the number of your staffers' applications to resign in the last few days?

[Golushko] As a matter of fact, I was discussing this topic with the Cadres Administration chief only today. Yes, there have been applications, but I would not say that there has been any sharp increase in their number.

[Yakov] And what is your attitude toward Zhirinovskiy's statement that, when he comes to power, he will reemploy all dismissed KGB staffers?

[Golushko] He makes many statements. (N. Golushko laughs—V.Ya.) The press even reported that I had a meeting with him. In actual fact, the closest I have ever come to him was when I saw him on the television screen. All this is a joke.

[Yakov] You will have to reappraise staffers before recruiting them in the FCS. What criteria will be applied in the reappraisal process?

[Golushko] The same criteria as always: Sense of duty, high standards of professionalism, loyalty to the fatherland.

[Yakov] Nikolay Mikhaylovich, could we expect a more detailed conversation with you on the results of the disbandment of the Ministry of Security and the creation of the FCS once you have completeed the elaboration of proposals? It is virtually impossible to get through the apparatus and barrier of aides and speak to you on the telephone, so let us set a firm date....

[Golushko] This could be done in January. On the 10th.

Government Leaders' 27 Dec Activities Reported

PM2812124993 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Executive Branch: Monitoring"]

[Excerpt] **Council of Ministers' Working Day**

Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin today [date not specified] held a working conference with his deputies. We have learned from sources close to the premier that the conference discussed cabinet reshuffles.

First Vice Premier Oleg Soskovets examined issues relating to the Ministries of Communications and Transport, and the problems and tasks facing these departments in 1994. The first vice premier spent the afternoon on a preliminary "evaluation" of the agenda for the Russian Federation Government Commission for Operational Matters.

On the morning of 27 December First Vice Premier Yegor Gaydar was at a conference organized by Sergey Filatov, leader of the President's Administration. After the conference the first vice premier attended a meeting of the "Russia's Choice" faction at the parliamentary center.

First Vice Premier Vladimir Shumeyko took part in the Russian Federation premier's conference, and then worked on current issues.

Vice Premier Aleksandr Shokhin is on leave.

Vice Premiers Boris Fedorov and Sergey Shakhray took part in Viktor Chernomyrdin's conference. The afternoon was devoted to current business.

Vice Premier Anatoliy Chubays held a conference with deputy chairmen of the State Committee for the Management of State Property. They discussed the results of privatization in 1993 and the tasks (in preliminary terms) for 1994.

Like his colleagues, Anatoliy Chubays took part in Viktor Chernomyrdin's conference.

Following the working conference with the Russian premier Vice Premier Yuriy Yarov held a conference with directors of pharmaceutical industry enterprises. [passage omitted]

Leaders' 28 Dec Activities

PM2912135193 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 29 Dec 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Executive Branch: Monitoring"]

[Text] **The Council of Ministers' Working Day**

As always on Tuesdays, Russian Government Head Viktor Chernomyrdin met with President Boris Yeltsin. There was a discussion on a broad range of questions, and in particular on the alteration of the Russian Government composition.

Fist Vice Premier Oleg Sovkovets chaired a session of the Commission for Export Controls, later hosting a conference on questions of structural policy. In the afternoon, a session of the Russian Federation Government Commission for Topical Questions took place under the chairmanship of Oleg Soskovets. It examined questions of support for light industry and textile enterprises, as well as for enterprises producing baby foods.

First Vice Premier Yegor Gaydar had a meeting with L. Bochin, chairman of the Russian Federation State Committee for Anti-Monopoly Policy.

First Vice Premier Vladimir Shumeyko was engaged in resolving routine questions.

Vice Premier Boris Fedorov took part in the work of the Commission for Topical Questions.

Vice Premier Anatoliy Chubays held a joint press conference with Russian Property Fund Chairman V. Sokolov and S. Belyayev, general director of the Federal Administration for Bankruptcy Matters.

Vice Premier Yuriy Yarov met with scientists from the pharmaceutical industry at a conference chaired by him. In the afternoon, Yuriy Yarov took part in the session of the Russian Government Commission for Topical Questions.

Personnel

In line with edicts of the Russian Federation president, the following appointments have been made:

Viktor Samoylov—general director of "Rosvooruzheniye," the state company for exporting and importing arms and military hardware;

Kondrat Yevtushenko—representative of the Russian Federation president in Khabarovsk Oblast;

Nikolay Davydov—representative of the Russian Federation president in Kurgan Oblast.

Under a directive of the Russian president, Ravik Smirnov has been appointed deputy chairman of the Commission for State Honors under the Russian Federation president.

Documents

Under the president's edict "On Measures to Rehabilitate the Kalmyk People and on State Support for Their Revival and Development," it is decreed that a federal program for the socioeconomic development of the Republic of Kalmykia-Khalmg Tangch and the national-cultural revival of the Kalmyk people be drawn up by 1 June 1994, specifying sources for financing it.

Under the Russian Federation president's directive "On Measures to Assist the Activity of the Russian-American Enterprise Fund," the Russian Federation Government is tasked with giving the fund all-round assistance in its activity. The Russian Federation State Committee for the Management of State Property is assigned through this directive the task of assisting in resolving the question of providing the fund with premises on a leasehold basis in Moscow, and with official premises in one of the cities of the Far East region. The aim of setting up this fund is to further the development of private business in Russia.

Statements

Oleg Davydov, minister of foreign economic relations, told press representatives that problems of preserving and continuing erstwhile links were discussed during his trip to countries of the former "socialist camp." Thus, an agreement was reached in Budapest on resolving the question of mutual indebtedness on the basis of commodity exchange, while the Bulgarian side, in the minister's words, expressed a readiness to establish a system of free trade with Russia.

Moscow

At its regular session, the Moscow Government examined questions of progress in fulfilling programs for the construction of cottages and collective market gardening, as well as the distribution of 1 million square meters of municipal housing in 1993. In addition to this, the agenda contained a question on the termination of meat supplies to Moscow within the context of EC humanitarian aid.

Officials Comment After End of Hostage Incident

Soskovets Lauds Joint Efforts

PM2912111193 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 29 Dec 93 First Edition p 1

[Nikolay Modestov report: "A Unique Incident—So Declared Russian First Vice Premier Oleg Soskovets at a Press Conference Held After the Release of the Hostages"]

[Text] The situation's uniqueness consisted not only in the technical parameters of the helicopter, which were unusual for this type of crime—the single entrance door to the craft, the maneuverability in flight, the cramped and eclosed nature of the cabin—but also in the large number of schoolchildren seized by the terrorists, and the professionalism of one of the bandits (who was a former military pilot), as well as the degree to which the criminals were armed, and their aggressiveness. According to Oleg Soskovets, not a single state with experience of dealing with terrorists could provide a clear, error-free plan of action. The success of the operation, the government first vice premier asserts, lay in the coordination and mutual understanding between all those who took part in rescuing the terrorists' victims—representatives of the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Armed Forces, the Security Ministry, the Air Force, financiers, and medics.

For more than four days, the staff set up especially under the Russian Federation Government followed the situation constantly. Nobody could be sure of success, and the situation was very grave. The people that the security services were up against were not novices or schizophrenic loners, but professional and remorseless criminals. Suffice it to say that the gang's ringleader has three criminal convictions, and one of its members was tried for rape. Oleg Soskovets also noted the courage and endurance of the pilots.

The main responsibility for dealing with the gang lay with those subordinate to First Deputy Internal Affairs Minister Mikhail Yegorov. However, all the heads of oblasts and the rayons in the North Caucasus, even of those regions where a state of emergency is currently in force, took part in resolving the situation. As Oleg Soskovets stated, terrorism can only be overcome through joint efforts. Yet again we are persuaded of this upon analyzing the case of the seizure of hostages in Rostov.

Grachev Praises Pilots

LD2812152693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1440 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev said that the act of terrorism with schoolchildren taken hostage in Rostov-on-Don last week was carefully planned.

Meeting in Moscow Tuesday [28 December] with the pilots who voluntarily manned the helicopter carrying the kidnappers, Grachev said that the terrorists were awaited by a car and a helicopter.

Grachev has said that after the terrorists chose a helicopter as a means of transport, it became clear that they were going neither to Iran nor to Turkey. He said that the pilots managed to fool the terrorists and land the helicopter at another place which helped their prompt detention.

Journalists were informed of the terrorists' plans. They planned to make a false landing in the Chechen Republic, then, by using radio silence, to fly over to Khasavyurt (Dagestan) where they were being awaited by their accomplices and a transportation means for escape. However, the pilots spotted the helicopter on the ground and altered the course of their chopper. Bad weather conditions helped the pilots to deceive the hijackers and they landed in the suburb of Makhachkala.

Congratulating the pilots, Grachev said that the helicopter's chief pilot, Valentin Padalka, and he fought in Afghanistan for almost one year. The minister also said President Yeltsin instructed him to give the pilots high state awards.

The minister said by their heroic deed Russian pilots raised even higher the country's prestige in the international arena. During the operation, he said, the army showed cohesion and that it was able to accomplish difficult tasks. That is why all attempts to disintegrate the army will only weaken it, he said.

The minister said that it is planned to complete the withdrawal of Russian troops from abroad.

Lost Ransom Money To Be Written Off

LD2812182193 Moscow ECONOMIC NEWS AGENCY in Russian 1600 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] It would seem that the Russian Central Bank will have to write off the million dollars scattered over the Caucasus mountains by the terrorists who took the children hostage, according to Russian Central Bank Chairman Gerashchenko, who was speaking at a news conference at the beginning of the week. At the same time, he explained that the two commercial banks who provided cash would not suffer any financial loss, since the money was not given as credit, it was bought. In other words, cash was exchanged for bank money.

The head of the Central Bank also acknowledged that the creation of a special reserve fund to cover various emergencies was needed. The absence of such a fund could be explained by the fundamental rule of bankers—that money not in circulation is dead capital. Fortunately, there had been no precedents.

Coup Plotters Trial Adjourned Until 5 Jan

LD2912101993 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] An adjournment has again been announced at the trial in the case of the State Committee for the State of Emergency, which resumed on Wednesday [29 December]. Interfax reports that it will last until 5 January. The adjournment is the result of defendants' ill health, this time being Anatoliy Lukyanov, Valentin Pavlov, and Yuriy Plekhanov.

Lukyanov Ill

LD2812210193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1837 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Former chairman of the USSR's Supreme Soviet Anatoliy Lukyanov who was elected to the State Duma will not attend the December 29 court session in the trial of the August 1991 coup plotters. He told Interfax Tuesday [28 December] that he was ordered by doctors to stay in bed until at least December 30 to recover from pneumonia.

Lukyanov's counsel Genrikh Pavda thinks that because his client is an MP he cannot be tried.

Lukyanov himself thinks that he was arrested illegally in the first place because he was an MP then and so whatever the investigators did was illegal. In today's context it was up to the Supreme Court or the State Duma to decide whether he could be tried, he believes.

He also said that he wanted to tell the truth about the August 1991 events and state his own case because he had not told the investigators anything.

[Moscow INTERFAX in English also transmits the following item at 1837 GMT on 28 December: "The State Duma chairman must be sought among deputies representing small parties and be 'a level-headed person well-versed in politics and legal matters who could balance this unbalanced Duma,' former chairman of the Supreme Soviet Anatoliy Lukyanov told Interfax Tuesday. He had been elected to the Federal Assembly in a single-seat constituency in the Smolensk Region.

["Lukyanov strongly objected to electing a member of one of large parliamentary group chairman of the Duma so as to avoid confrontation.

["Lukyanov preferred not to discuss the possibility of taking that position as long as his mandate is disputed. "I am so well aware of all the complications in this position that I would have to do much thinking about it," he said."]

Barannikov's Lawyer on 'False Conclusion' About Health

LD2812143193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Dmitry Steinberg, lawyer of Russia's former Security Minister Viktor Barannikov, is calling for bringing to justice the medical experts who examined his client and issued, as he put it, "a deliberately false conclusion." INTERFAX learned this from Steinberg himself.

Earlier, doctors came to the conclusion that, despite a number of cardiovascular disorders, the state of Barannikov's health makes it possible for him to remain in police custody and be subjected to questioning. The former security minister had been detained following the early October events in Moscow.

Steinberg declared that he "leaves the conclusion, irresponsible from the viewpoint of medical ethics and professional duty, on the experts' conscience." The lawyer officially announced that he has no intention of being an "accomplice in drawing a fatal end to Barannikov nearer." He insists that all the medical documents pertaining to his client's health should be carefully studied.

According to the lawyer, doctors stated that Barannikov suffers from progressive stenocardia and other disorders, and that "even a small amount of physical or psychological stress leads to higher blood pressure, heart pain, and dizziness." Medics in Moscow's Clinic No. 29, where Barannikov was examined, came to the conclusion that he must not be subjected to any stress. Nevertheless, the official conclusion says that his illness is not in a critical phase, the lawyer pointed out.

Steinberg says he fears that the Lefortovo detention center where Barannikov is being kept is not in a position to give him skilled medical care, particularly at night, when the medical staff is absent.

Constitutional Court Discusses Federal Court Vacancies

LD2812143493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1358 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] As Interfax has learned from sources in the Russian Constitutional Court, the Court's members met Tuesday [28 December] morning to discuss the president's decree on filling the vacancies in the Federal Court.

The presidential decree provides for by-elections, including the election of judges to the Constitutional Court, taking into account the Constitutional Court's decision to suspend the powers of Valeriy Zorkin and Viktor Luchin.

The powers of these two judges were suspended on December 2 when they were accused of political activities, something prohibited by law.

The candidacies of the judges have to be submitted by the Ministry of Justice and the Russian Congress of Judges, to be held before March 31, 1994.

Yeltsin Orders Care for 'Irradiated' Semipalatinsk Citizens

LD2812165693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1626 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has signed a decree "on social protection of citizens who were irradiated as a result of nuclear tests at the Semipalatinsk testing site".

Under the presidential decree, this category of citizens is granted benefits and privileges earlier provided to citizens who were affected by radiation as a result of the Chernobyl power plant blast.

The presidential press office reported that the decree went into force from the date of signing, December 20, 1993, but will be submitted to the Federal Assembly for confirmation before benefits are paid to the aforementioned category of citizens from April 1, 1994.

Economic & Military Issues

Officials Hold News Conference on Privatization

Chubays Says Privatization On Track

LD2812125993 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] A news conference was held at the Foreign Ministry press center today by Anatoliy Chubays, chairman of the State Property Committee, Sergey Belyayev, general director of the Directorate of Liquidation Commissions, Vladimir Sokolov, chairman of the Russian Property Fund, and Maksim Bulkov, director of the Russian Privatization Center The news conference was devoted to the results of privatization in Russia.

According to Anatoliy Chubays, privatization in Russia has been successful because it was endorsed and supported by the people of Russia. Sixty-two percent of them supported this concept of privatization.

Replying to correspondents' questions, Anatoliy Chubays said, in particular:

[Begin Chubays recording] In general, as of the end of 1993, about 110 million people in Russia have already made use of their privatization vouchers.

Many of them have become shareholders in privatization voucher funds, others have become shareholders in their own enterprises, or become shareholders in other enterprises via voucher auctions. On the whole, Russia can boast that over 55 million citizens of the Russian Federation are shareholders, that is, private owners.

This means that the task that the president set us back in 1992 has been accomplished: to create millions of owners in Russia, a task that quite honestly seemed then extremely difficult to carry out.

With the facts and figures to hand, today we can prove that we have carried out that task.

On the whole, it is not difficult to see from the figures just given that the privatization program in Russia is de facto two- thirds complete. Two-thirds in terms of small enterprises, two-thirds in terms of large enterprises, two-thirds in terms of use of privatization vouchers.

With this foundation and with this basis and given the mechanisms now in operation, we have a firm guarantee that by 30 June 1994, as required by the presidential decree, the last privatization voucher of a Russian citizen will be used, as promised on 14 August 1992 when the president signed his decree on privatisation vouchers.

Today we can firmly say that this program will be accomplished in full. [end recording]

Official Comments on Bankruptcies

LD2812190893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Report by correspondent G. Fadeyeva; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The other day President Yeltsin issued an edict on the mechanism for implementing the Law on Bankruptcy. A Federal Directorate on Insolvency has been set up, and Sergey Belyayev who heads it, asserts that those enterprises that are not afraid of being declared bankrupt and who announce their insolvency at the earliest possible stage will be the gainers. This is certain to attract the attention and receive the support of federal bodies.

[Begin Belyayev recording] We are joining the work being done within the framework of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Workers on the Bankruptcy of Entrepreneurs. A social protection center has been set up that today is developing the normative documents that will subsequently be adopted by the government. In particular, on the setting up of funds for the support of the workers of enterprises. [end recording]

Besides, the timely announcement of bankruptcy will help to avoid latent unemployment. There are already programs for the retraining of staff. Sergey Belyayev stated that not a single enterprise will be liquidated without well thought-out social protection measures.

As for state enterprises, Sergey Belyayev believes that privatization is the most reliable way to avoid bankruptcy, as it is the only way of getting additional investments through bankruptcy procedures and auctioning. Today there are only about 100 enterprises that are officially insolvent. According to all the forecasts their number will grow significantly next year.

Gerashchenko Outlines Tasks for New Year

PM2912121993 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Kucherenko: "Central Bank Has Imparted Year's Results and Optimism for the Future"]

[Text] That is approximately how one can describe the speech delivered 24 December by Central Bank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko in which he analyzed the current situation and announced his department's work plans in 1994.

V. Gerashchenko is "satisfied in part" with the results of the outgoing year. He said that as a whole they have managed to resolve the settlements problem although there are sometimes disruptions by some commercial banks and clearing centers. In his opinion the present nonpayments problem is linked mainly with the fact that enterprises simply lack the funds. The Central Bank of Russia head promised that in 1994 clearing centers will switch to new systems of communications and will be reequipped, which will finally do away with complaints against these links.

The Central Bank of Russia head approved the banks' efforts to create independent electronic settlement systems and clearing houses. He does not believe that the question of the commercial banks turning the clearing centers into joint-stock companies has been removed from the agenda. A voluntary approach and the principle of equal participation are needed here in his opinion. Although the transfer of clearing centers to an "electronic basis" under the auspices of the Central Bank of Russia and the improvement of the quality of their work could entirely satisfy present malcontents. [sentence as published] The territorial structure of the country's main bank will also change.

"The regional authorities can now put pressure on the Central Bank of Russia's territorial administrations. We shall travel the path of enlarging our subdivisions," Gerashchenko said.

He recalled that in the outgoing year a Russian currency system was created and expressed regret that a ruble zone of a new type has not actually taken shape because differences in economic policy views in the countries of the former USSR are too great. The Central Bank of

Russia head hopes that in a year or two we will nonetheless realize the need not only to preserve the common economic space but also to harmonize the progress of reforms.

"We intend to cooperate closely with the government in the forthcoming year," Gerashchenko noted. "For instance, we shall prepare a number of proposals to revive investment policy. But state wisdom and will are needed. So far the appropriations envisaged under the budget reach those for whom they are intended only seven months later, when they have been eaten away by inflation."

He noted the qualitative development of the Russian banking sector. Despite criticism of the decision on the compulsory increase in banks' capital, the majority of banks have made this increase. And whereas at the time 75 percent of commercial banks were below the Central Bank of Russia requirements, now the number of small structures has been reduced sevenfold. Note was made of the banks' positive role in implementing centralized credits released by the decision of the government commission for credit policy to the agricultural sector for the dispatch of food and commodities to remote regions. Although inflation makes them inadequate the Central Bank has been inundated with requests to extend the credits.

In 1994 the Central Bank intends to work on amendments to banking legislation so that the Central Bank's monitoring functions over the work of the commercial banks can be intensified. To ensure that their leadership "does not commit a gaffe" and does not lose clients' money, avoiding putting other banks on the verge of bankruptcy. Under conditions when the auditing service and the interbank market is not developed, the Central Bank of Russia is having to fill that vacuum. Gerashchenko promised to cooperate closely with the IMF in modernizing our credit and financial system and improving the payments base and called the banking system which is taking shape the system which best accords with the country's needs and was most unflattering about those who are fighting for its "revolutionary breakdown" and are seeking to copy mechanically the U.S. reserve system.

Touching on currency matters, the Central Bank of Russia leader noted that a stable ruble exchange rate against the dollar is being successfully maintained. As of 21 December currency reserves had risen sixfold, reaching $4.4 billion. The introduction of currency control measures over the export of, at first, strategic, and then other goods in 1994 will make it possible to switch to the practice of the compulsory sale of all profit in freely convertible currency, which will make the movement of the ruble exchange rate more stable.

But so far the main operators on the currency exchange are consumer goods traders who have now come up against the boundary of effective demand: The affluent stratum has already bought enough leather jackets and video recorders and so the present dollar exchange rate is relatively stable. Now voices are being heard saying: Let us stop producing our own automobiles, it is cheaper to import them. But, the chief banker believes, no one stops to think: import with what?

Yarov Warns Against Neglecting Social Policy

LD2912112393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1103 GMT 29 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow December 29 TASS—"The reforms are doomed to failure without an active, balanced, and carefully calculated social policy," Vice-Premier Yuriy Yarov, responsible for social matters in the Russian Cabinet, told a press conference here today.

Yarov said that the Russian Government, jointly with subjects of the Federation, had drawn up a concept of the country's social policy, which will be submitted for endorsement to the Russian Parliament. "This document," the vice-premier stated, "proceeds from the premise that the reform should be carried out not for the sake of reformation, but for the sake of human beings."

The concept is to be implemented in three phases. The first stage, which is to last until the end of 1994, envisages "maximum support to socially vulnerable sections of the population by bringing the size of allowances, pensions and scholarships up to the level of the subsistence minimum". In the course of the second stage, characterised by economic stabilisation, the state will "create conditions for every citizen to be able to independently raise his living standards". During the third stage, which will presumably begin from 1996, the social services will work against the background of an economic upswing.

The government's main social goals next year will be to create economic and legal conditions, encouraging the active part of the Russian society to ensure their welfare by efficient labour; to ensure basic social guarantees in the sphere of the population's incomes and to maintain minimal guarantees for medical care, education and culture that are now in force; to keep up an optimal correlation between the incomes of the active part of the population and the disabled; to increase target social support to the least protected sections of the population; to prevent massive unemployment.

Minister Presents Export, Import Figures

LD2812141193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1350 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By BUSINESS-TASS]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—Notwithstanding the unfavourable world market conditions at large, Russian exports during 1993 will remain on the last year's level and are estimated to be worth 42 billion U.S. dollars, according to a preliminary assessment, Russia's

Minister of Foreign Economic Relations Oleg Davydov said in an interview with BUSINESS-TASS today.

The share of fuels in the general volume of exports traditionally continues to remain high and will constitute about 50 per cent. Thus, 80 million tonnes of oil is to be exported which by 21 per cent exceeds last year's volume, natural gas—90 billion cubic metres (an increase of 2.5 per cent) and oil products—35 million tonnes (an increase of 38 per cent).

Russia's imports in 1993, according to the minister, will shrink by 52 per cent in comparision with the last year and will be worth about 24-25 billion dollars.

During this period the country imported 74 thousand tonnes of fresh frozen meat (by 75 per cent less than in 1992), grain - 11 million tonnes (62 per cent less) and sugar - 2.6 million tonnes (30 per cent less).

Speaking of prospects of the developments of foreign economic ties of Russia, Oleg Davydov noted that during 1994, apparently, present volumes of exports and imports will be maintained. But volumes of centalised exports and imports will be considerably lower than in 1993.

"In 1994 the ministry plans to put a proposal before the government to eliminate all export duties (probably, except on oil), as is the practise in civilised countries, where interests of native producers come first," Oleg Davydov concluded.

Arms Exports Expected To Fall

LD2812145593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1416 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] On Tuesday [28 December] President Yeltsin signed a decree to appoint Viktor Samoylov, former military adviser to Deputy Premier Vladimir Shumeyko, the director-general of "Rosvooruzhenie," the state-owned company for the export and import of arms and military equipment.

Yeltsin signed his decree on forming the company, designed to establish a monopoly on arms trade, in mid November. The document provides for reorganizing the specialized foreign trade associations "Oboronexport," "Spezvneshtekhnika," and the Main Department for Cooperation, and for withdrawing them from the system of the Foreign Trade Ministry.

In the meantime, arms trade experts believe that the restoration of a state monopoly on arms trade will have a negative impact in this area of foreign trade. According to them, Russia's concept of arms exports is only in the development phase, and its destruction cannot fail to result in further cuts in the volume of military-technical cooperation with foreign countries.

According to the Foreign Trade Ministry, in 1988 the volume of such cooperation surpassed 13 Bn dollars; in 1992 it fell to about 2.5 Bn (this year it has remained at about the same level). There were plans to increase it next year to 4 Bn dollars, particularly at the expense of granting a number of big arms producers the right to trade abroad. However, the Foreign Trade Minister, Oleg Davydov, said on Monday that next year the export of Russian arms will continue to fall.

Zhirinovskiy's 'Superweapon' Claim Questioned

PM2812130993 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 7

[Aleksandr Khokhlov report: "Hitting Everyone At One Go?"]

[Text] Having left on a trip abroad following his party's victory in the Russian election, Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy, the outstanding liberal of the post-perestroyka era, has left the civilized world disconcerted by his statement regarding a wonder weapon.

East and West had for so long been so afraid of the "Red menace" that this fear has probably become part of the genetic makeup of several generations. Consequently, politicians and newsmen over there are now quite seriously discussing what weapons Russia will again be using to scare them.

Only one thing can be said without any doubt—the Russian military-industrial complex created many diverse and deadly types and classes of weapon. The USSR prepared for a war with virtually the entire world. But was it possible to "get away" from our "pursuers" and develop something that our "probable adversary" would never have heard of?

Nuclear weapons continue to be the most terrible weapons in the world. Clearly, they were what Vladimir Volfovich had in mind when he tried to scare the world. Or maybe it was neutron weapons. Both are handled by the same department.

"The Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy and our scientific research institutes are not developing [razrabatyvat] an 'amazing' new weapon," a high-ranking staffer at the department said. "Work continues on the creation [sozdaniye] and improvement of third-generation nuclear weapons—directed weapons [oruzhiye napravlennogo deystviya]. Similar work is under way in the United States, Britain, France, and maybe China. Russian nuclear scientists know nothing about some 'superweapon' based on new physical principles. In my personal view, it's nonsense."

Nor does anyone at the State Committee for the Defense Sectors of Industry know anything about the weapon announced by V.V. [Zhirinovskiy]. Deputy Chairman Gennadiy Georgiyevich Yanpolskiy has announced that nothing of the kind exists in nature. Unfortunately, the Defense Ministry could tell us nothing either. They said they had not received any "superweapon."

Grachev Denies Zhirinovskiy's Claim

LD2912144693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1409 GMT 29 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS observer Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow, 29 Dec—Russia has "no top-secret weapon. We are open to foreign experts and they have the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the developments being made in our country."

This is how Russia's Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev commented at a meeting with journalists today on recent statements by Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy on the appearance in Russia of a new top-secret weapon, "Elipton," allegedly superior in might to nuclear power, and "capable of destroying all mankind."

Zhirinovskiy made these statements during his trip to a number of European countries.

Media Issues

Reaction to Yeltsin's Edicts on Media Organs

Aide Prefers 'Different Scheme'

PM2912121593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Dec 93 First Edition p 4

[Interview with Yuriy Baturin, doctor of juridical sciences and presidential aide, by ITAR-TASS observer Tamara Zamyatina; place and date not given: "The First Estate Is Laying Its Hands on the Fourth Estate"]

[Text] The president's edict on improving state management in the sphere of mass information, published 22 December, created more questions than it gave answers. An ITAR-TASS observer asked Dr. of Juridical Sciences Yuriy Baturin, aide to the Russian Federation president and one of the authors of the Russian Federation Law on the Mass Media, to explain its implication.

[Zamyatina] Are you satisfied, Yuriy Mikhaylovich, with the approach to regulating the activity of the press enshrined in the president's edict?

[Baturin] The scheme for reorganizing the mass media was elaborated in the government with the participation of the Ministry of the Press and the Federal Information Center [FIC]. The adopted decision has to be acknowledged as a fact, although, if it had been up to me, I would have chosen a different scheme.

According to the president's edict, those functions of the Press Ministry and the FIC which related to the electronic mass media are transferred to the Federal Service for Television and Radio Broadcasting. Those that are left, connected with the printed press and the publishing houses, come under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation Committee on the Press.

The Russian Federation Committee on the Press becomes a federal organ of the executive. Everything here is more or less clear.

But the Federal Service for Television and Radio Broadcasting is a central organ of the federal power. That is, the question of its subordination to a particular authority remains open. It is thereby proposed that the regulations governing the activity of the Federal Television Service will be improved and developed.

All this means that the reform of the mass media has only begun. The reasons for this reform lie not only in the functional optimization of the mass media. Let us not close our eyes to the fact that the reform was also the result of a struggle between the Press Ministry and the FIC, including the result of a struggle between their leaders.

[Zamyatina] What dangers do you see for representatives of the "fourth estate" in connection with the creation of new structures for press affairs?

[Baturin] The reorganization that has been undertaken really increases the state's control over the mass media and to a certain extent threatens freedom of the press—which I cannot welcome.

Let us examine, for example, the scheme for the functioning of the Federal Television Service. As we know, we have state television companies and we have independent ones. But the latter remain nonstate only in formal terms, inasmuch as we are acquiring a monopolist in the form of the "Efir" ["Airwaves"] state television and radio engineering center. This is that same Ostankino tower-spire through which all central television channels are broadcast.

At one time the "Efir" center was part of "Ostankino," then it was hived off to be an autonomous enterprise, and later a struggle began among the major television companies for a "controlling package" in the event of a share flotation. Then things turned out as in the well-known anecdote, when the forester came and drove everyone away....

The "key" to the airwaves will now be in the hands of the deputy chairman of the Federal Television Service. And it is understandable that in this way state control will be exercised over broadcasting—including both on the fourth channel, on which the independent studio of Independent Television and other companies will work, and on the sixth channel. That is, the "state's hand" will rest on the "key" to the airwaves.

Approximately the same mechanism for controlling the press is also enshrined in the structure of the Russian Federation Committee on the Press. Previously the FIC and the Press Ministry distributed subsidies to press publications, but this will now be done by the new committee. The subsidizing of the mass media out of the budget is a kind of state regulation of their activity.

[Zamyatina] Tell me, Yuriy Mikhaylovich: Why did you—someone who is not indifferent about the fate of the "fourth estate"—not uphold freedom of the press during the discussion of the scheme for state management of the mass media?

[Baturin] You must not think that all my advice and warnings are accepted. As regards the specific Edict on the Mass Media, I saw it only after the document had been agreed among the president, Chernomyrdin, and Shumeyko. I could have tried to say something, but it was already too late: The president was flying to Ashgabat when he was given the edict to sign. It was no longer possible to change anything.

Unfortunately, such situations do happen. Although, when work is proceeding normally, I do have an opportunity to make suggestions about changing draft edicts. But, you will agree, introducing a different ideology into the reorganization of the mass media is a different task from correcting the text with a slight stroke of the pen. This would take not just 15 minutes, nor even many days.

[Zamyatina] What do you think: Will the position of the press not be aggravated by the new parliament, which will certainly be able to find loopholes in the imperfect documents governing the activity of the mass media?

[Baturin] They are not loopholes but wide-open gates, because parliament is a legislative organ. It has the right to create a committee on the mass media and will certainly start drawing up a package of laws on television and radio broadcasting which will quite possibly provide for a totally different scheme of activity for the electronic press.

[Zamyatina] That is, "pleasant" surprises are still perfectly possible. If you were entrusted with elaborating a model for the activity of the press under the present conditions, what optimum would you propose?

[Baturin] When we were compiling the Russian Federation Law on the Mass Media we proceeded from the premise that the press must be independent. But it soon became clear that the economic situation is such that publications do not survive without state guardianship.

If we proceed from your formulation of the question, several state information organs must remain, while the rest have the right to work for themselves. But today's realities are such that the economic crisis remains, and the factor of sharp political polarization is preserved. Of course, all this deforms the position of the press. But in an "incorrect" situation it is practically impossible to find the "correct" solution to the question of the status of the mass media.

'New Approaches' Seen Necessary

PM2912094793 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 2

[Commentary by Alla Yaroshinskaya, member of the Presidential Council: "The Reformers, Like the Opposition, Need a Platform of Their Own"]

[Text] At the last session of the Presidential Council—about two weeks before the bloody events of 3-4 October (it has not met in full session since then) I spoke about the collapse of the state mass media. It seemed to me than that the president and everyone working with him understood that the mass media needed to be reformed. After all, in essence no one was taking a proper interest in the state mass media (I am not talking about the independent papers). That was why we all expected some new decisions and edicts from the president on this question. These documents had long been discussed in the press, on the radio and television, and among journalistic circles.

Now finally these edicts have appeared. To be frank I was hoping that since I am the only journalist on the Presidential Council they would ask me for my opinion on this matter. But unfortunately that did not happen. The first impression you get from these documents is this: They do not contain a word about the need for a new concept of the development of the mass media in the new conditions—following the adoption of the new Constitution and the formation here of new parties, some of which have taken up leading positions. In this situation, it seems to me, there must be completely new approaches and that should have been mentioned in the edicts.

The precise opposite has happened: the lowering of the whole level of state policy with regard to the press. Why do I come to that conclusion? If you read through the edict "On Improving State Management in the Sphere of the Mass Media" it is clear: It talks about the creation of the Press Committee. We should be talking about state policy but what is being created is not a State Committee which would pursue such a policy, it is simply a committee. They are trying to reduce the press to the level of a post office.

Recently we have completely forgotten about state policy in the sphere of book publishing. We have no new textbooks today. We are printing the old ones in Germany instead of placing orders with our own printing combines, which are often idle, and thus saving hard currency. Perhaps the situation will change in the new year.

Finally, I have the impression that the edicts that we are talking about reflect not a struggle of different concepts to find the best one but a struggle among politicians for power over the mass media.

The question that arises is this: Do the state and the government need their own mass media through which they could pursue their policy? Taking the broad view, state bodies should not found their own information media. But today, in the transitional period, when the fate of the reform is essentially being decided, I am convinced that the president and the reform team must have their own mass media which would provide a means of influence. There is no need to fear accusations of politicization and propaganda.

Throughout the world the state pursues its policy via the mass media: It buys air time on television and so forth. We have yet to reach that stage. If the opposition has a

platform why can the "position," that is, the state—the government and the president—not have their own? Unfortunately a clear stance on that question is absent from the edicts.

Impact of Edicts Assessed

PM2912091993 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 2

[Nikita Vaynonen article: "The 'Fourth Estate': Metaphor or Political Reality?"]

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin's package of edicts on the reorganization of the mass media published by ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on 24 December contain several noteworthy points.

Both the institutions created to replace the Ministry of Information and the Press and the Federal Information Center—the Russian Federal Service for Television and Radio Broadcasting and the Russian Federation Press Committee—have the status of a "central organ of the federal executive power," in other words, the same status as ministries have. The news agencies' report on the possible creation of an administration on the mass media under the president has not been confirmed yet—there is no such edict in this package. At the same time, Boris Yeltsin clearly hinted at Wednesday's press conference that this package signifies the strengthening of the president's influence over the press.

That much is indicated by the appointment of Aleksandr Yakovlev to the post of leader of the Federal Service for Television and Radio Broadcasting while at the same time being chairman of the "Ostankino" Television and Radio Company. Thus the television and radio service is headed not by a functionary with origins in the press but a prominent state figure. It seems that the state in the form of the president has at last recognized that the title "the fourth estate" is not a metaphor but a political reality.

The main tasks of the Federal Television and Radio Service and the Press Committee will be to coordinate the activity of the all-Russia and regional media, assist the objective coverage of events in the country and the world, engage in legislative activity in the sphere of the press, pursue a single state policy in that sphere, oversee budget finance and subsidies for the mass media, and register and license them. Thus the package of edicts makes no mention as yet of ending state control of the mass media. On the contrary, one can speak of the strengthening of the state's positions in this area.

At the same time as state broadcasting is being reinforced, a step is also being taken toward independent television: It is being given part of channel frequency eight (known to the viewers as channel four) which the company NTV will use to broadcast every day from 1800 hours till shutdown. In the morning and the evening, as before, this channel will carry the broadcasts of "Russian Universities." which are dedicated to culture, science, enterprise, the land reform, and so forth.

A holding company—the "Russian State Television and Radio Technical Center 'Efir'"—is being created, as is the Russian state radio broadcasting company "Golos Rossii," which will prepare broadcasts for foreign listeners including for our fellow countrymen abroad. Henceforth TASS, the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union, no longer exists officially. Its successor in law is the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia. However, its trading name remains ITAR-TASS.

The journalistic community has reacted to the package of presidential edicts on the press in different ways. On the one hand there is the hope that state television will finally become a truly state concern, in other words, that it will be free from advertising and commercial pressure and will be professionally concerned with the affairs of culture, education, the spiritual growth of the nation, and its civilized participation in politics as is customary in state television around the world. But questions remain.

Does the package of edicts mean that the authorities have abandoned their intention to set the press free? After all, it is no secret that in recent weeks there has been active discussion of the idea of banning state structures from being founders of the mass media. You may agree or disagree about whether such a decision is opportune. In my view it may be fully applied in principle only to the newspapers, certainly not to television and radio. Furthermore, such a ban should not mean the refusal of funding. However, is there any point in continuing the discussion of this question when the edicts on the federal television and radio service and on the press committee include the functions of budget funding and subsidizing of the mass media but make no mention at all of the role of the founder? Does everything remain the same for long? ITAR-TASS has been given great tax incentives. Do the rest not want the same?

Far from everything is clear regarding the material and technical base of the mass media. It remains state property. Even the creation of the holding company "Russian State Television and Radio Technical Center 'Efir'" does not actually signify the destatization of the means of information production: The bulk of the shares in "Efir" are assigned to the state for three years. But the most important thing is that only workers of the "enterprises providing technical support for the activity of the television and radio companies"—enterprises which form the holding company—may be shareholders, in other words, anyone but journalists. Their participation in the privatization of the means of production of the fruits of their labor, that is, of information, is postponed again. On the president's behalf, you will recall, it was said that there will be a transitional period in the destatization of the mass media. One can only hope that these edicts are the beginning of such a period.

Journalists Stage Sit-In at Press House

PM2812131593 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Glasnost Being Deprived of Its Residence Permit"]

[Text] The saga of the Russian Press House in Moscow goes on. Faced with the threat of forcible eviction, staffers on 35 Russian publications and members of the Journalists' Union, in an attempt to uphold their legal rights, have staged a sit-in in the building and are refusing to leave. In response, A. Voykov, deputy leader of the President's Administration, has threatened the journalists with the possible use of the Special-Purpose Militia Detachment. The journalists, who have seen a lot in their time, are nonetheless hoping that the building will not be stormed.

Internal Audit, Resignations at Ostankino Reported

MK2812105093 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Has Someone in 'Ostankino' Been Caught Embezzling?"]

[Text] Currently under consideration is the question of auditing the financial activity of Mr. Bandura, "Ostankino" deputy general director for economic matters.

MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS has learned from competent sources that back under Bragin, Mr. Ignatyev, "Ostankino" administration chief, tasked a company staffer with carrying out an unofficial audit of the activity of Bandura and "Ostankino" First Deputy Director Ignatyev. Materials related to the audit have been collected and are about to be submitted to Mr. Yakovlev. MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS has learned that the audit unearthed fairly intriguing incidents that will require further inquiry.

As of today, however, Mr. Lazutkin has a new, fairly high-ranking office. As for Bandura, on 24 December he submitted an application to resign of his own accord. The application was considered by Mr. Yakovlev, but a definite decision is so far unknown. To all appearances, they will let Bandura go in peace. Ignatyev is to be fired as well under the official pretext of having been elected to the State Duma.

Regional Affairs

Yeltsin Signs Edict on Support for Kalmyk People

LD2812090593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2004 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow December 27 TASS—President Boris Yeltsin has signed a decree "on measures to rehabilitate the Kalmyk people and provide state support for their revival and development". The decree was signed on December 25, the presidential press service said Monday.

The document rules that a federal program of social and economic development of the Republic of Kalmykia-Khalmg Tangch and of national and cultural revival of the Kalmyk people be developed and sources of financing for its implementation be determined by June 1, 1994.

The decree became effective from the moment of signing.

Edict Arouses 'Great Expectations'

MK2912111093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 Dec 93 p 2

[Natalya Pachegina report in the "Russia" column: "The Edict on Rehabilitation Is Dedicated Personally to the Kalmyk People and the People Are Not Complaining"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Yesterday's presidential edict, the news of which, incidentally, became a "pleasant new year's eve surprise" for the officers of the Kalmyk Republic's permanent representation, is arousing great expectations in Khalmg Tangch. The employees at the republic's mission, who have not as yet seen the text of the document, are in no hurry to make comments on it. Even so, they told NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA that with the present situation in the Northern Caucasus, the Kalmyk people are deliberately overlooking the question of territorial rehabilitation, bearing in mind, though, that tracts of land in Dagestan and in Astrakhan Oblast that were some time in the past in possession of the Kalmyks should some day return to their owners. According to mission officials, the people are also somewhat confused by the fact that, as far as they know, the Kalmyks are the sole people in the Russian Federation who have suffered from acts of repression but not received material compensation from the state (NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's correspondent has heard analogous complaints also from the Chechens, the Ingush, the Karacheyevs, and the Koreans). [passage omitted]

Poll Shows Majority of Muscovites Support Continued Reform

PM2912120893 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Who Is Hit by Prices?"]

[Text] Some 46 percent of participants in a sociological poll carried out among Muscovites by Grigoriy Pashkov's service described price rises as a "disaster." But 52 percent of respondents stated that they are coping with inflation, and this indicator was one of the highest since 1991.

However, nearly one-third of those polled (31 percent) claim that in conditions of price rises, their family is in danger of real hunger. Some 59 percent of respondents do not feel this threat.

Some 62 percent of respondents are fairly optimistic about unemployment: They stated that they are not afraid of losing their jobs. Some fear in this respect is felt by 30 percent of those polled. And 4 percent said that they had already lost their jobs.

At the same time 36 percent of respondents are convinced that free prices must not be abolished. The opposite view is held by 30 percent of those polled. The vast majority (56 percent) urge the continuation of

economic reform, and only 11 percent advocate a return to the old system of managing the economy.

The poll involved 1,127 respondents, a representative sample on the basis of sex, age, level of education, and main types of activity.

Chechen Clans Put Off Congress; Dudayev's Fall Predicted

MK2812114093 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 2

[Natalya Gorodetskaya report under the "Territories" rubric: "Chechnya Has Found Itself 'On the Brink of Civil War'. Congress of Teyps Moved to 2 January"]

[Text] The congress of Chechnya's clans [teyps], planned for last Saturday, which was supposed to call elections for the republic's parliament and set up a central electoral commission, did not take place. On that day, stated Ruslan Kutayev, chairman of the council of clans, families, and ethnic groups, Chechnya was close to the start of civil war. All roads to Groznyy, according to him, were cut as of early that morning by Ministry of Internal Affairs subunits loyal to President Dzhokhar Dudayev, which were prepared to open fire on congress delegates if they tried to approach the theater building where the congress was supposed to be held.

The commanders of five armed Chechen subunits are known to have supported the congress and to have stated their readiness to protect the delegates and maintain order in the city. They offered to start combat operations and to free forcibly Teatralnaya Ploshchad from presidential supporters, thus making the congress possible. However, Mr. Kutayev said, it was decided at a spontaneous rally to avoid bloodshed and postpone the congress to 2 January, and to hold it in the rayon center of Shali, 20 km from Groznyy. As the chairman of the council of teyps stated, the commander of a tank regiment stationed in Groznyy had promised to insure the safety of the delegates and to seal off the rayon center completely if need be.

While the clans' opposition raises the question of limiting presidential powers by a new parliament, the more radical democratic opposition is discussing the creation of a team that would bring Chechnya out of the economic and political crisis. A conference, "Consolidation of Democratic and Opposition Forces of the Chechen Republic," took place on 24 December under the auspices of the public and political movement "Bashlam." Movement leader Salambek Maigov stated in an interview with POSTFACTUM that they now possess the "technical possibilities" for a forcible overthrow of Dzhokhar Dudayev, but they see no sense in it because "the question of the president's resignation has come to a head—this is a matter of days, a maximum of months." According to him, the conference raised the question of consolidation of Chechnya's democratic opposition forces. Under discussion was a program of further actions whose fundamental factors, according to Mr. Maigov, are "the restoration of economic and political relations with the surrounding republics, primarily with Russia." In his opinion, questions "pertaining to the sovereignty and strategic interests" of the Chechen Republic should be decided by the people by way of a referendum."

Tatar Head Disbands State Council; Ethnic Russians React

MK2812115093 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 2

[Unattributed report under the "Provincial Chronicle" rubric]

[Text] Kazan—Mintimer Shaymiyev has abolished the state council of the president, composed of representatives of various parties and movements in the wake of the 1991 August putsch on the model of a consultative "roundtable." In the meantime, the council met on three occasions without having any impact on the shaping of the republic's policy. State Council member Rafail Khakimov described the abolished state council as an unnecessary structure, while Vladimir Belyayev, leader of the "Accord" ["Soglasiye"] movement, assessed its dissolution as a step along the road to the monopolization of power.

Members of the public movement "Citizens of the Russian Federation" have appealed to the Russian Federation president to conduct an investigation into instances in which the republic's power structures ignored the 12 December elections, and of anti-Russia propaganda in the republic's mass media. The appeal also voices a request to establish the parallel use of Russia's and the republic's symbols, and to prevent the placing of power structures under Kazan's jurisdiction; appellants also urge restoring the Russian Federation's ownership of territories of Tataria, as well as the establishing of an administrative mission of the Russian Federation president.

Irkutsk Oblast Chief Suspends Soviet, Blames Mafia Ties

LD2812130793 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 28 Dec 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Yuriy Nozhikov, head of administration of Irkutsk Oblast, has decided to suspend completely the activity of the oblast soviet of people's deputies and at the same time has annulled the deputies' joint decision on the gradual reform of the representative body of power. Nozhikov said this step has been taken because of the existence of a fifth column in the region represented by part of the former body of deputies which is helping the central mafia organizations.

'Special Rule' To Be Introduced in Makhachkala

LD2812154193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1515 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Special rule is to be introduced in the capital of Dagestan, Makhachkala, on January 3. The decision was

made by the republic's leaders owing to the sharp aggravation of the crime situation. The special rule provides that people must have documents on themselves that allow them to move about the city, that hotels must be checked regularly, and that the movement of trucks in the city be banned.

Interfax reports that people without identification cards will be fined by the police 10,000-100,000 rubles, or will be sent to the police station to prove their identity.

All vehicles that are to move in the city from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. are subject to obligatory registration. To combat crime more efficiently, the republic's leadership has set aside money for the Interior Ministry to buy 60 cars and other technical equipment. It is also planned to introduce permanent police posts in all neighborhoods.

Volgograd Oblast Voted Against Constitution

MK2812133093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 3

[Unattributed report under the "NEGA Reports" rubric: "Volgograd Oblast"]

[Text] According to updated reports, the oblast did not support the constitution at the 12 December referendum. Those who voted for it accounted for 49.7 percent of oblast residents.

Kabardino-Balkaria Parliament Elects Chairmen, Committee

MK2812130093 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 2

[Unattributed report under the "Provincial Chronicle" rubric based on materials by INTERFAX, RIA-NOVOSTI, and POSTFACTUM news agencies: "Nalchik"]

[Text] At a joint session of the two chambers of the republic's new parliament, a committee on interethnic relations was formed, which includes deputies of Kabardin, Balkar, and Russian origin. The first meeting also elected chairmen of the chambers.

The Congress of the Kabardin People called on the president and the parliament to speed up the adoption of Kabardino-Balkaria's new constitution that would provide for maintaining the republic's sovereignty and equality of all peoples. The Congress of the Kabardin People's session, which analyzed the reasons of the failure of the Kabardin national movement in the 12 December elections, decided to restructure and to reorganize the organization at the next Congress of the Kabardin People, scheduled for the middle of February.

New Chuvashia President Federov Profiled

MK2812122093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 3

[Irek Namyz report in the "Chuvashia" column: "The Republic's First President, Nikolay Fedorov, Intends To Maintain Normal Relations With the Center"]

[Text] The turnout in the second round of voting on 26 December in Chuvashia was 52 percent, of which 55 percent cast their votes in support of Nikolay Fedorov. His main rival, Lev Kulakov, rector of Mordovia State University, polled 38.8 percent of the vote.

Nikolay Vasilyevich Fedorov is 35. In 1980 he graduated from Chuvash State University. In 1989 he was elected USSR people's deputy from the Chuvash ASSR. From 1989 till 1990 he was a member of the USSR Supreme Soviet and chairman of the Supreme Soviet's Committee on Legislation, Legality, and Order. At the Second Congress of USSR People's Deputies he voted against the Nikolay Ryzhkov government program and against amendments being made in Article 95, Part II of the USSR Constitution (on electing deputies from public organizations). In the 1989-90 period Nikolay Fedorov took part in working out many democratic laws, including the law on the press. In 1990 Mr. Fedorov declined Gorbachev's proposal to join a USSR Supreme Soviet commission, saying that he wanted to engage in real politics.

Nikolay Fedorov was justice minister in the Ivan Silayev government when it was formed in 1990. He quit the CPSU on the eve of the August 1991 coup during which time he was in Cheboksary, where he addressed city residents with an appeal against the State Committee for the State of Emergency. Beginning in September 1991, he took part in a campaign to remove Ivan Silayev from his post of chairman of the Russian Government. In November 1991 he was appointed justice minister in the reform government. He took part in elaborating the Russian Federation's new Penal Code but a conflict with the Russian State Legal Directorate headed by Sergey Shakhray forced Fedorov to resign as justice minister. Since then Nikolay Fedorov has been among the centrist opposition to the Russian Government.

Nikolay Fedorov's main slogans during his election campaign for the Chuvashia presidency were: Reforms without shock, pursuing legal reforms in the republic, and ensuring normal tax and budget relations with the Center.

International Affairs

Ukrainian Marines Block Black Sea Fleet Offices

LD2812181193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1555 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Roman Zadunaisky]

[Text] Moscow December 28 TASS—Ukrainian marines armed with submachine guns blocked on Tuesday [28 December] two offices of the Black Sea Fleet in the ports of Odessa and Ismail and threatened to open fire when navy officers attempted to get through, TASS learned by telephone from the headquarters of the fleet in Sevastopol.

The marines blocked the offices of the Naval Engineering Services which deal with housing construction and did not let anyone in.

According to the headquarters, a Ukrainian marine threatened to open fire when commander of a brigade of ships, Captain First Rank Evgeny Khalaichev attempted to get through the cordon.

The press service of the fleet said it is unclear on whose orders the marines blocked the departments, but added that the Ukrainian Navy command "does not take measures to stabilise the tense situation."

Takeover Called 'Provocation'

AU2912122793 Paris AFP in English 1204 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] Sevastopol, Dec 29 (AFP)—The command of the disputed Black Sea fleet described Wednesday [29 December] a takeover by armed Ukrainian marines of two offices as a "provocation" and warned it was prepared to take measures to counter the move.

In a statement released here, fleet spokesman Andrey Grachev and the head of engineering Vyacheslav Kim said Ukrainian authorities were using as a pretext to seize the offices the fact that the officers of the two units had pledged allegiance to Ukraine.

"This is a provocation aimed at disrupting Russian-Ukrainian relations," they said, adding: "We reserve the right to use adequate measures to stabilise the situation."

The statement came amid unconfirmed reports that fleet commander Admiral Eduard Baltin was on holiday in Moscow and that his aide Vitaliy Larionov, known for pro-Russian views, was in charge.

Ukrainian marines armed with sub-machine guns seized Tuesday the offices of the fleet's naval engineering services located in Odessa and Ismail and threatened to open fire if navy officers attempted to enter, according to a report from the ITAR-TASS news agency.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry however denied the report and said that the offices were "made subordinate to the Ukrainian Navy command by agreement" with the Black Sea Fleet Command.

Russia and Ukraine have been at odds over control of the Black Sea Fleet since the collapse of the Soviet Union but Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk agreed in August to lease the powerful armada to Russia.

The decision has sparked discontent in the ranks of Ukrainian seamen and officials say privately that the agreement between Kravchuk and Russian President Boris Yeltsin faces major hurdles in its implementation.

The port city of Sevastopol has also been plagued by a series of murders of top fleet officials including the director of a military factory, Viktor Semionov, and the head of the press service Andrei Lazebnikov.

It was not known if the murders are connected to the political dispute over ownership of the fleet and Ukrainian authorities have since tightened control over security in the city.

Local administrator Ivan Yermakov this week issued a decree stepping up police security for a period of two months to crack down on crime, news agencies reported.

Takeover Said Part of Prior Agreement

WS2912131793 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1100 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] The ITAR-TASS agency reported on 28 December that Ukrainian Marines armed with assault rifles had occupied the offices of the Naval Engineering Services of the Black Sea Fleet in Odessa and Izmail. Our correspondent has been told by Admiral Ryzhenko, chief of staff of the Ukrainian Navy, that Black Sea Fleet Naval Engineering departments in Odessa, Izmail, and Mykolayiv were subordinated to the Ukrainian Navy Command on 28 December in accordance with an agreement with the Black Sea Fleet Command. Under the same agreement, the property of these departments was transferred to the Ukrainian side on 28 December, and Ukrainian Navy sentries began to guard the facilities. Thus, the report was another ITAR-TASS canard aimed at exacerbating the already complicated situation in the fleet. Our Odessa correspondent Leonid (Lemeshko) will provide some details in this live telephone report.

[Lemeshko] I was at the Naval Engineering Services facilities at 0600 this morning. I want to make this clear again—they were transferred to the Ukrainian Navy under an agreement with the Black Sea Fleet Command. Thus, they could not be captured by armed Ukrainian Marines. Why would anyone do this to their own property? In accordance with military manuals, guards are occupying posts around the facilities. By the way, only sentinels, as usual, are armed with assault rifles. The authors of the ITAR-TASS report tried hard to present these soldiers as an assault team. There were no unexpected accidents at the facilities. I have just made this recording at the Naval Engineering Department.

[Begin recording] My name is Major Klushnikov. I am chief of the Ukrainian Navy Engineering Service Department in Odessa. I swore allegiance to Ukraine on 24 December 1993, and on 27 December I was appointed to this post. Servicemen and civil employees of the department also expressed a desire to serve and work for the benefit of the Ukrainian nation. We have a large multinational staff and we have been performing our duties regardless of all the current hardships. Unfortunately, in the Mykolayiv garrison, there were attempts of armed penetration into a similar facility undertaken by Black Sea Fleet forces. In light of this, we took preventive measures to safeguard the normal functioning of our unit. On 28 December, we reinforced our guards. Black Sea Fleet representatives visited me on 28 December, demanding that the personnel return under the Black Sea Fleet Command. However, they met with the staff's refusal, despite threats. We are ready to continue our service for the benefit of Ukraine. [end recording]

Defense Ministry Position on CIS Forces Clarified

WS2912122393 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1100 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Report by Marat Pogorelov on news conference held by Deputy Defense Minister Ivan Bizhan; place and date not given]

[Text] In a news conference, Deputy Defense Minister Ivan Bizhan has commented on three primary issues—on Defense Minister Radetskky's participation in the Ashgabat CIS summit, nuclear arms, and the temporary extension of military service. We have repeatedly presented our leadership's standpoint on the two latter issues. This standpoint found understanding with open-minded people. However, people with a biased approach always see what they prefer to see. The recent Ashgabat summit was no exception. I suggest listening to Colonel General Ivan Bizhan's comments on this issue.

[Begin Bizhan recording] I have already told you that the Ukrainian defense minister is not a member of the CIS Council of Defense Ministers, and this is why the delegation of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry did not take part in discussing any issues and the Ukrainian defense minister did not sign a single document. Some organs of the mass media reported that the Ukrainian defense minister addressed the summit with a declaration contradicting Ukraine's policy in the military sphere, thus altering Ukraine's stance. I want to point out that this is not correct. On the first hand, the Ukrainian defense minister made no declaration at the summit. He simply spoke at the session, because he was attending a defense ministers' conference for the first time. With regard to changing Ukraine's policy or standpoint, I want to remind you that neither the minister nor the ministry determine, lead, or can alter military policy. This lies within the competence of the Supreme Council and the task of the defense minister and his department is to carry out resolutions adopted by the legislature.

I admit that there were two provisions that evoked misunderstanding, I mean that certain people heard what they wanted to hear. The defense minister said that he was examining the possibility and expediency of the Ukrainian defense minister joining the CIS Council of Defense Ministers. This is literally what he said. Furthermore, he pointed out that the final decision on this issue rests with the Ukrainian Supreme Council and president. Defense Minister Radetskyy said that taking into account the fact that the Chief Command of the CIS Joint Armed Forces—by the way, these Joint Armed Forces never existed and they do not exist now—is being transformed into a Coordinating Staff for Military-Technical Cooperation within the CIS, Ukraine is also examining the possibility and expediency of sending its representatives there. We mean that this structure will no longer have any supervisory functions as stipulated earlier. I want to underline again that this was just a suggestion that has to be examined, and a final solution will be reached by authorized state structures. [end recording]

More on Deputy Minister's Comments

LD2912133193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1135 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] "Ukraine's military policy is unchanged, its bloc-free status remaining one of its basic principles," Deputy Defense Minister Ivan Bizhan told a press conference in Kiev on Tuesday.

Bizhan said that the Ukrainian Defense Ministry attached great importance to bilateral military technological cooperation with CIS members. This cooperation is the agenda the two-day talks that began in Moscow on Tuesday [28 December]. The Ukrainian delegation at the talks is led by Deputy Defense Minister Ivan Oliynyk, and the Russian delegation by Oliynyk's counterpart Colonel-General Boris Gromov.

The Ukrainian Defense Minister said earlier that the sides would discuss the technical servicing of military equipment and arms, joint use of testing grounds, and transportation of arms supplied to third countries under interstate agreements.

Bizhan repeated the Ukrainian parliament's arguments which made the START 1 treaty ratification dependent on the provision of guarantees of security and financial and technological aid to Ukraine. "None of these problems has been solved yet," he said. "Nonetheless Ukraine will put two regiments (20 missiles) of SS-19's off combat duty and deactivate (sever heads from carriers) a number of SS-24's by the end of the year," he said and added that the missiles put off combat duty could never be used in the future while desactivation only meant a reduction of operational readiness.

Parliamentary Delegation Holds Talks in China

LD2812124093 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1100 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] A Ukrainian parliamentary delegation led by Dmytro Pavlychko, chairman of Ukraine's Supreme Council Commission for Foreign Affairs, has arrived in Beijing on a working visit at the invitation of the Chinese National People's Congress Standing Committee. The Ukrainian delegation held working negotiations with deputies of the Chinese National People's Congress led by Zhu Liang, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. The two countries' parliamentarians exchanged experience in legislative work under the conditions of economic and social reform. They compared the two countries' stances on the most important foreign policy issues. They outlined prospects for further development of Ukrainian-Sino relations. At the same time, they noted common or similar approaches in Ukraine and China to numerous problems on the international scene. The delegation visited the State Commission for Restructuring the Economic System, where the Ukrainian guests were briefed on the principles and course of economic reform process in China. These meetings were held in the spirit of mutual respect, good will, and mutual understanding, which is traditional for Ukrainian-Chinese relations.

Apart from Beijing, the delegation will also visit China's third largest city, Tianjin, where it will familiarize itself with the special economic and technological development zone.

National Affairs

Government Issues Resolution on Financing Expenditure

LD2912135293 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1233 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] Kiev, 29 Dec—Ukraine's Supreme Council has passed a resolution on the procedure for financing expenditures from the state budget for January 1994. The resolution in particular concentrates the Cabinet of Ministers' attention on its nonfulfillment of parliamentary resolutions on urgent measures to curb hyperinflation in the country. The resolution also contains a draft plan for Ukraine's economic and social development in 1994 and a draft Ukrainian state budget for 1994.

The resolution permits the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers and the National Bank to carry out financing priority expenditures within the limits of actual revenues that will be received by the budget in January 1994 before the Ukrainian state budget for 1994 is approved.

Kravchuk Discusses Elections With Party Leaders

AU2812145293 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 23 Dec 93 p 1

[Oleh Oliynyk report: "A Meeting With Leaders of Parties and Movements"]

[Text] A consultative meeting between Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk and leaders of political parties and movements lasted three hours.

The pre-election campaign, which has, in fact, already started in Ukraine, may bring to power a new parliament, which will be democratically elected in an independent state. The implementation of this thesis is envisaged by the recently adopted law on elections and other normative acts. Corresponding work has already started in provinces. However, questions remain—will not the economic crisis lead us to that limit when power will be good for nothing, when confidence in state institutions will be absent, and when any adventurer or demagogue will be able to take advantage of our political apathy?

There is the danger of this, and, for that reason, the conversation between the president and the political establishment was frank. What will be the social choice; can and must parties, while caring about their own tactical pre- election interests, also remember nationwide interests, which are vital to all people and all regions of Ukraine—these problems were discussed at the meeting.

In L. Kravchuk's opinion, the situation is further complicated by the absence of a new constitution. It is unrealistic to amend the present one. Perhaps, a law on power could be adopted (or offered for a referendum) for the transitional period. The course of the pre-election campaign will also be influenced by the so-called Russian factor. In some regions, it will unite people whereas, in others, it will give rise to counteraction. Generally speaking, elections may even further divide Ukraine into political blocs and camps, but, in order to preclude this, it is necessary, first and foremost, to protect the interests of Ukrainian citizens—masters in their own land.

The president said openly that the present power has failed to objectively assess all of Ukraine's specific characteristics, its economic possibilities, qualification of the administrative personnel, and the main factor—sentiments prevailing in the masses of people. The objectively correct course toward state independence turned out to be unsupported in many important parameters.

Of course, the participants in the meeting had more than enough recipes for extricating Ukraine from the crisis situation. Moreover, such dissimilar leaders as S. Khmara (Conservative Republicans), A. Matviyenko (Labor Congress), or M. Bazylyuk ("Civic Congress") spoke about the need to take extraordinary measures and about political voluntary efforts. The president was also reminded about the CIS, Pereyaslav Rada, and, of course, Zhirinovskiy.

Kravchuk gave to understand that taking "extraordinary measures" is not a good idea for Ukraine. Voters must have their say. The one they choose on 27 March will shape state policy. However, he will also take upon himself gigantic responsibility. In two years of independence, noted the president, we have already seen many politicians who say one thing while in opposition, but as soon as they occupy a power seat, start speaking in an entirely different manner. Shortcomings and the lack of political culture are also noticeable in the fact that some people still find it proper to struggle "against," rather than "for" and play the role of a prosecutor.

Notwithstanding all this, a constructive spirit prevailed at the meeting. To all appearances, the results of elections in Russia have made a certain impression upon proponents of "the closest unions and joint actions," and the political struggle in Ukraine mainly develops proceeding from internal state interests, rather than from transnational ones. It is quite clear that 80 percent of the work cycles in Ukraine transcend its administrative borders—this was recalled by M. Azarov (the Party of Labor) and, therefore, if one wants to provide people at these enterprises with jobs, ties with that same Russia need to be looked for or restored. He expressed a hope that the leadership of the state will find support in the healthy forces within our society in order to overcome the crisis without dictatorship or coercion.

"One should not give up the new parliament for lost too early," pointed out L. Kravchuk, "for the only reason that the elections law is not what some people would like it to be. Let us elect the Supreme Council and thus make yet another step toward maintaining peace and stability in our society."

Kuchma To Lead Industrialists, Entrepreneurs Union

WS2912100493 Kiev KIEVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian 17 Dec 93 p 1, 2

[Report by Aleksander Maslov: "Leonid Kuchma—New Leader of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs"]

[Text] The election of former Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma as president of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs [USPP] became a sensation at the USPP's Third Congress.

Former USPP President Vasyliy Yevtukhov announced his resignation, as he promised in a recent interview with KIEVSKIYE NOVOSTI. In this way, Leonid Kuchma obtained a very effective instrument for waging political battles. He previously expressed his willingness to participate in such battles in the media. Currently, the union comprises over 14,000 collective and individual members representing various forms of ownership.

Perhaps, following Leonid Kuchma's example, many of today's hurrah-reformers will stop dividing industrialists between "real marketeers" and "red directors," since strictly economic categories have become priorities for all of them.

Undoubtedly, state officials have also realized this fact. The congress was attended by several political and economic celebrities such as [acting Prime Minister] Yukhym Zvyahilskyy, [Deputy Prime Minister] Valentyn Landyk, [Minister of Economy] Roman Shpek, [Finance Minister] Hryhoriy Pyatachenko, [Minister of External Economic Relations] Oleh Slepichev, [New Ukraine leader] Volodymyr Hrynyov, [former Prime Minister] Vitold Fokin, and V. Sumin [chairman of the Council of Entrepreneurs]. Also Leonid Kravchuk decided that it was necessary to personally greet the congress, despite his recent return from Tunisia.

What can one expect from the most powerful organization headed by a new and more energetic leader? The union's program for activities has already been presented by the new USPP leader in a statement following the establishment of the Interregional Reform Bloc signed by Leonid Danylovych and Volodymyr Hrynyov. The alignment of those two names alone could testify to the fact that the new president of USPP will fight for granting more rights to the territories, which would be in line with the main objectives of USPP, and that he will try to transfer the priorities of state interests from the political sphere to the economic one.

Kuchma's statements on relations between Ukraine and Russia were very interesting, although many people would still refute them. We still have an historic chance of finding solutions with Russia, but this requires the goodwill of politicians, stated Kuchma. Also expressed at the congress were concerns over the situation with energy sources and foreign trade. Apparently, the USPP will continue with its policy against isolationism, which is advocated by representatives of the radical right wing, and which has lead us to an economic and political deadlock.

Despite its somewhat slogan-like nature, the main goal of the union is to extricate Ukraine from the crisis.

Party Urges Economic Union To Avert 'Catastrophe'

WS2812155193 Ivano Frankivsk PRYKARPATSKA PRAVDA in Ukrainian 18 Dec 93 p 1

[Statement issued by the All-Ukrainian Party of Labor; place and date not given: "To Avert Catastrophe"]

[Text] Ukraine is heading toward national catastrophe. There are no funds to pay for energy sources. Skyrocketing prices have left millions of our citizens without the means of subsistence. The Labor Party Executive Committee resolutely protests the current political course. Ukraine needs a new course, one based on a peaceful foreign policy oriented toward the vast potential of the CIS. The present Supreme Council is not capable of conducting such policies.

We are calling upon the Ukrainian president to announce the government's program of immediate actions on national radio and television. We are calling upon working people not to resort to ill-considered moves.

The Labor Party was one of the first parties to condemn the liberalization of prices and pointed to the inherent weaknesses of this course. We are offering our proposal, which was dictated by life—to immediately begin negotiations with Belarus and Russia on creating an economic union capable of delivering our people from chaos and confusion. We cannot make it alone.

USDP Condemns 'Pro-Communist' Peasant Party

WS2912121593 Kiev VECHIRNIY KYYIV in Ukrainian 23 Dec 93 p 1

[Statement issued by the Ukrainian Peasant Democratic Party; place and date not given]

[Text] We consider the establishment of yet another peasant party by neocommunists as an attempt to keep the communist nomenklatura of the agriculture complex in power, maintain socialism, and impede privatization leading to the countryside's revival.

In connection with this, the Ukrainian Peasant Democratic Party [USDP], which was established as a result of the fierce battle between the communist oligarchy and democracy, and which was registered as a second party following the Ukrainian Republican Party, protecting interests of the peasantry impoverished by the corrupt Mafia, defending forms of private ownership, and endorsing national revival of the countryside, states the following:

The so-called Peasant Party of Ukraine has been established by the former secretary of the Kherson Oblast Communist Party Committee and his pro-communist nomenklatura, who have nothing in common with the poverty-stricken peasantry, and who proclaim the eternity of the villein-kolkhoz system that pushes Ukraine toward the Zhirinovskiy empire, which has been testified to by the results of the latest elections in Russia.

On the eve of the electoral campaign, the masked neocommunists, fencing with slogans about "social justice," plot to exploit feelings of the abused peasants, deceive them, and halt the process of denationalization and privatization of land and property, as well as prevent Ukraine from entering world markets.

USDP categorically refutes the false slogans of the recently created so-called Peasant Party of Ukraine, and calls on all nationally conscious peasants and workers of the agricultural complex to retort the neo-Bolsheviks who want to preserve the villein-kolkhoz system and their cushy jobs.

National-Fascist Party Founded in Lvov

MK2812121093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 2

[POSTFACTUM report under the "In Brief" rubric]

[Text] Lvov—The founding meeting of a National-Fascist Party of Ukraine took place in Lvov's House of Officers. As party chairman Fedor Zaviryukha announced, the political organization he leads will preach the supremacy of the Ukrainian nation and the extension of Ukrainian borders to the scale of Kievan Rus by winning back part of the present territories of Russia, Belarus, Poland, and the Baltic states.

'New Moment' Political Organization Formed in Lvov

WS2412105593 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1500 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] As reported, a new political association—New Moment [Nova Khvila]—was born in Lvov. Here is a comment by our correspondent Kazimir Plaksyuk:

[Begin recording] The association's members are well-known lawyers, economists, scientists, and professional politicians in Lvov, in particular, Academician Ihor Yukhnovskyy, Professor Viktor Penzenyk, Taras Stetskiv, Mikhaylo Kosiv, and Ihor Hryn. They have been united to involve professional intellectuals in political activity, especially those who did not wish to fill the ranks of already existing political parties in Ukraine. During a meeting with journalists, People's Deputy Ihor Hrynev said that since [words indistinct] forces of Ukraine have not agreed on an optimum list of candidates for the upcoming elections, the regional teams of democratic forces are to take the leading role. This is the case with our New Moment. We aim at forming an optimum body of Lvov deputies for the parliament, including not only representatives of parties and movements, but also nonparty specialists. Thus, we have a nonparty association of experts, which is ready to cooperate with democratic forces of the region. The economic program of the New Moment is clearly delineated, stressing the need for urgent economic reforms. The political program is also clear: power for the middle class. Other principles of the new political association in Lvov include a strong democratic government, an active social security policy, and support for the development of national culture. New Moment includes among its adherents the Popular Movement of Ukraine and—closest to the association spirit—the Ukrainian Republican Party, as well as the bloc Democratic Center from Kiev and other parties and associations of the centrist direction. In addition to the primary goal to introduce its candidates to the parliament and create a political faction in the Supreme Council for supporting the practical implementation of the program, New Moment wants to constitute a [word indistinct] coalition for forming power structures on the oblast and local levels. In my opinion, the New Moment members are reasonable and competent people with a firm belief in the success of

democratic transformations in Ukraine. I wish they were successful in their work on the difficult road to building statehood. [end recording]

State of Emergency Not To Be Introduced in Sevastopol

WS2812155993 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1500 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] The situation in Sevastopol is under control and there is no real threat to peace in the region. This is one of the main conclusions drawn at an expanded conference called by the Sevastopol City Administration and attended by the city's leadership, the Black Sea Fleet command, representatives of the Ukrainian Navy, and law enforcement officials. The attention of the mass media is riveted to Sevastopol again because of a series of murders of Black Sea Fleet officers and Ukrainian Naval personnel. It was announced at the conference that a state of emergency will not be introduced in the city because of a lack of judicial analysis of the proposal. At the same time, the situation provides no ground for complacency. This is why a complex draft of additional measures for fighting crime and strengthening law and order in Sevastopol was adopted. It was suggested that a special mode of law enforcement activity be introduced in the city for two months instead of a state of emergency.

Further on Anticrime Measures

LD2812152993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1358 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] In Sevastopol, law enforcement and other state bodies in charge of curbing crime have instituted toughened measures on December 27, to be in effect for two months. The decision was made last night by the collegium of the Sevastopol state administration.

At the collegium were Ukraine's Interior Minister, General Andrey Vasilishin, the leader of the republic's security service Yevgeniy Marchuk, and Ukraine's commander of the naval force, Admiral Vladimir Beskaravainyy. Most speakers agreed that there were no grounds for introducing a state of emergency in the city.

The situation in Sevastopol and in the Black Sea Fleet has been aggravated following the murder in mid December of the head of the Black Sea Fleet's press service, a Russian citizen, Captain First Rank Andrey Lazebnikov. He was killed at the entrance to his house. Another two senior officers of the Black Sea Fleet have been killed over the past month.

The head of Ukraine's security service Yevgeniy Marchuk has said that a decision was made to increase 3-4 times the personnel for combatting crime in the department of counter-intelligence and in Ukraine's security service responsible for Sevastopol, reports Interfax.

A priority task today, he said, is the preservation of civil peace in Sevastopol, as well as a tougher stance in fighting organized crime. Marchuk also said that a special team of investigators would be created in the security department.

Vasilishin said that law-enforcement bodies would create a strong team of investigators to throw light on the crime committed against Andrey Lazembnikov. The minister said the ministry is not going to involve servicemen in disclosing the crime. There will be stronger patrols in Sevastopol, he said. It is also necessary to toughen control for entry to the city.

Addressing the collegium, Beskaravainyy described as an absolute disgrace video materials from Sevastopol shown in the Sunday program on Ostankino TV December 26.

The chairman of the Sevastopol city council Viktor Semenov spoke about the intention to send a message to the Ostankino leadership which proposes that information about the measures taken in Sevastopol under the auspices of the city authorities be televised after it is approved by the city council's press service.

Reports on Armored Vehicles Denied

LD2912104593 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 0850 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow, 28 December—The Ukrainian Internal Affairs Ministry denied a recent report by the Ostankino TV and radio company on armored vehicles allegedly seen in Sevastopol's streets. "The situation in Sevastopol is calm and is under the control of the law enforcement agencies. Statistical data shows that intensified militia and servicemen's patrols in action there have somewhat improved the situation with crime in the city," the Ukrainian Internal Affairs Ministry's correspondents said in a Ukrainian TV report.

Rear Admiral Appointed Navy Chief of Staff

AU2912131693 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 28 Dec 93 p 4

[Unattributed report: "New Chief of Staff of Ukraine's Naval Forces"]

[Text] By order of Ukraine's minister of defense, Rear Admiral Oleksiy Ryzhenko has been appointed chief of staff and first deputy commander of Ukraine's Naval Forces.

He was born in 1944 in Kherson, graduated from the Black Sea Higher Naval School in 1968, the Naval Academy in 1981, and the General Staff Military Academy—in 1988. Between 1988 and 1991, he served as chief of staff of the Black Sea Fleet fifth operational squadron. Then he was appointed as first deputy chief of staff of the Pacific Fleet. Since 1992, he has been deputy commander of fleet in charge of rear services and chief of the Pacific Fleet rear services.

Officers Union Holds Congress, Elects New Chairman

WS2812155593 Kiev VECHIRNIY KYYIV in Ukrainian 21 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by Volodymyr Chikalin: "Will Ukrainian Insurrection Army Be Restored?"]

[Text] The Fifth Congress of the Union of Officers of Ukraine [SOU] was attended by 225 delegates, half the number of participants as at the last congress, held earlier this year. As was emphasized in speeches by Major General Oleksandr Skipalskyy, head of the Union of Officers, and other delegates, the drop in attendance can be attributed to the persecution of SOU members by the military command. This began last year, following the replacement of top military officials. Nevertheless, those who arrived in Kiev, according to Colonel Hryhoriy Omelchenko, deputy chief of the union, managed to overcome the slavish submissiveness. They will not retreat from the path of fighting for the further development of Ukraine's Armed Forces. Should somebody attempt to prevent us from doing this, as one of the delegates pointed out, we will restore the Ukrainian Insurrection Army. These words were met with a standing ovation, which testifies to the fact that the idea of serving the independent state is the essence of their lives. Today, when the Armed Forces along with the people are experiencing the most challenging times, the SOU sees its main goal as establishing an army that would truly and faithfully serve Ukraine. Their popularity has been reflected in recent polls— 66.2 percent of society supports the officer corps, and among peasants that number amounts to 83 percent. The popularity of the Armed Forces has provoked a particular attitude toward servicemen by the Supreme Council, which has adopted an electoral law that prevents military officials from participating in the upcoming legislative elections.

Following debate on a program of activities during the electoral campaign, the Fifth Congress expressed its readiness to support democratic forces. Maj. Gen. Skipalskyy tendered his resignation as union leader, having stated that he will run for a legislative seat. In this situation, Maj. Gen. Oleksandr Ryl, deputy commander of the Ukrainian Air Forces, was elected head of the union. By the way, following a recent article titled "Who Needs Commercial Aviation?" published in VECHIRNIY KYYIV, he was hospitalized and said to be relegated to the reserves.

Rukh leader Vyacheslav Chornovil and Vitaliy Zhuravskyy, leader of the Christian Democratic Party of Ukraine, also delivered speeches at the Fifth Congress.

Press Ready To Oppose Government, Demands Support

LD2812193993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1812 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Gordeyev]

[Text] Donetsk December 28 TASS—The council of editors-in-chief of Ukrainian newspapers and magazines has voiced their readiness to oppose Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and the government.

A council appeal published today the Ukrainian mass media bodies says the Ukrainian press is in disaster. Prices on paper, printing and mail services are skyrocketing. Nothing has been done by the Ukrainian leaders to support publications despite their repeated claims about the role and significance of press in building of independent state and formation of citizen consciousness.

"If the constitutional right of the people to printed information is further ignored, the council will call on its colleagues to boycott representatives of power structures at the upcoming parliament elections and oppose the current government and president," says the appeal.

Belarus

Government Resolution Establishes State Treasury

LD2812181393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1800 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By BELINFORM correspondent for TASS]

[Text] Minsk December 28 TASS—A resolution of the Belarusian Government envisages the formation of a state treasury to supervise budget fulfilment and unite the main state treasury of the Ministry of Finance and its offices in Minsk, regional and district centers.

The main treasury will accumulate money of the republican budget, state off-budget funds, republican state power bodies, ministries and departments, including branch off-budget funds, as well as their organizations and establishments financed from the republican budget and state and branch off-budget funds.

The government will instruct the Ministry of Finance to supervise money of the treasury, as well as account and service the Belarusian state debt and control operations on state guarantees. The National Bank will open a single treasury account to accumulate state finances. Treasury accounts of territorial bodies of the main state treasury will be open alongside their formation.

The Ministry of Finance is instructed to establish a schedule for closing bank accounts of the republican budget, state off-budget funds, republican state power bodies, ministries, departments, their organizations and establishments and transfer the money from these accounts to the single account of the treasury.

Army Short of Funds for Weaponry Purchases in 1994

LD2812204693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1837 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Sources in the Belarusian government told Interfax that the country's military budget would be 692.4 Bn rubles in 1994.

Valery Pavlov, Deputy State Secretary for National Security and Crime Fighting, thinks that "the Belarusian army will be short of funds for purchases of up-to-date weaponry and personnel training even though parliament met all Defense Ministry's requirements."

Belarus will need nearly $33 Mn, he said, to honor its commitments to the treaty on limitation of armed forces in Europe.

Moldova

INTERFAX Interviews Snegur on CIS, Elections

LD2712164193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1439 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Moldovan President Mircea Snegur told INTERFAX that the CIS Ashgabat summit would make it possible to implement the economic union even before the documents on them were ratified by Commonwealth parliaments.

"It was important for us that the CIS leaders unanimously called for transfer of Moldovan citizens who had been illegally sentenced in Tiraspol to constitutional bodies of Moldova," the president emphasized.

Snegur expressed concern over the election results in Russia and said that they should put the democratic forces in Moldova on alert. "If we stay on the sidelines watching the activities of those who want a merger with Romania we may have similar results," he emphasized.

Snegur said that in the February 27, 1994, parliamentary elections he would support centrist groups which advocated consolidation of the republic's national independence and sovereignty.

'Text' of Interview

LD2812183393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 28 Dec 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; by correspondents Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin, edited by Boris Grishchenko]

[Text] Below is the text of Snegur's interview with Interfax.

IF: What's your own appraisal of the results of a recent CIS summit in Ashgabat?

SNEGUR: Positive. It was a long-awaited meeting designed to clarify positions on many of the issues in hand. The point is many of the earlier agreements proved unworkable including those in the framework of a new economic union which Moldova thinks will help nudge economic contacts between CIS states on a bilateral and multilateral basis. A range of agreements were signed in Ashgabat which, it is to be hoped, will be put in place even before being ratified by CIS parliaments. More importantly, CIS leaders have supported Chisinau's demand for the transfer of a group of six Moldovans who were convicted by a court in Tiraspol. Its leader Ilie Ilascu was sentenced to death and five other members to various prison terms on charges of terrorism.

IF: The Ilascu case has caused an uproar in and outside Moldova while some political groups are trying to capitalize on it ahead of the country's general election. What is being done by the government to try to get the release of the Moldovan prisoners?

SNEGUR: The question of their handover to the Moldovan authorities has been in the center of the government's attention, let alone raised at international forums and my meetings with President Yeltsin. We have even agreed to humiliating talks with the leaders of Tiraspol separatists, never thinking that I would be accused of conspiring with them by Ilascu himself later. This is most appalling given that all and sundry knows it was the president who was taking measures to try to get the release of political prisoners while others were engaged only in verbal support. There are documents to prove who exactly helped the prisoners' families with relief aid and housing.

In these conditions, allegations by Ilascu's lawyer saying the sentence had been agreed on by Presidents Yeltsin and Snegur in Moscow sound utterly absurd. No one but a man of no intelligence can talk like that. This is absurd and I reject those allegations as out of hand. Nor do I accept similar accusations made by the Christian Democratic People's Front or the Congress of Intellectuals. It is regrettable that such allegations should also be made by former government officials who are well aware of the efforts taken towards achieving the release of the Ilascu group;.

For my own part, I will continue to work together with the parliamentary chairman and prime minister to take all opportunities and vigorous steps towards having the prisoners face the country's Supreme Court. With support from international agencies and the governments of neighboring states, including Russia, we will be able to resolve the issue. Shortly after convictions were announced, we sent official statements to leading international agencies asking for help in releasing the prisoners, opposition newspapers, however, keep silent on this, including those calling for re- unification with Romania and against the country's own statehood.

It is surprising the way in which opposition parties and movements get involved in the election campaign of a country whose statehood they do not recognize. In my view, the opposition was off to a bad start by staging a demonstration in Chisinau which has nothing to do with the Ilascu case. The Supreme Security Council meeting in Chisinau has arrived at the conclusion that the opposition's aim is to try to destabilise the situation in order to score points in the election campaign.

IF: Whom will you be supporting at the parliamentary election of February 27? Who do you sympathize with?

SNEGUR: It's a common view that the president should be neutral during an election campaign. I believe, however, that the president's neutrality should mean that he should provide equal conditions for all parties and movements taking part in the elections. I would like to say in this connection that I will take a special decision to that effect. Thus, I will sign a decree suspending government officials running for election until the election campaign is over. As for the position of the president, a position the whole nation should know, I don't think it's necessary for me to be neutral. Otherwise we may end up with the same situation as in Russia, when the people support the President and the Constitution, while the victory is won by the nationalist forces.

We cannot let power be taken by those who are trying to divert the republic from the road it has chosen. After I have seen the election programs of various parties and movements, I will be calling on the people to support those who seek to consolidate our independence and build a law-based state, those who stand for the equality of all citizens of the republic regardless of their ethnic origin and religion, help to carry out economic reforms and don't go with the wind. The political situation changes, but we must support consistent centrists, those who are not dragging us either to Moscow or to Bucharest.

IF: Carrying the parliamentary election through will pose serious problems. It's obvious that not all parts of Transdniestria will be voting. Besides, the Gagauz leaders are making their own conditions for the participation of the Gagauz population in the election campaign. In particular, they want the president to issue a decree on the status of the southern regions of the republic as a condition for the participation of the local population in the election. What do you think of that?

SNEGUR: I obey the Constitution and cannot sign such a decree. The president has additional authority for having the economic reforms carried out, but he has no additional political powers. I approved the budget for 1994 by decree, but I can't solve political problems in the same manner. The Gagauz leaders are perfectly aware of that. They also realize full well that one mustn't make any ultimatums as conditions for one's taking part in elections. Ultimatums can't solve any problems. I wish to say once again that I stand for giving a special status to the regions where the population is mainly Gagauz. We are actually doing some practical work for the national revival of the Gagauzes.

As president I am going to make every effort to have the new parliament solve the Gagauz problem. I will in fact try to get parliament take up the problem on the very first day it meets. I think the Gagauz population should be satisfied with that and take part in the parliamentary election.

Snegur Approves 1994 State Budget; Spending Cut

LD2812150293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1441 GMT 28 Dec 93

[MOLDOVA-PRESS-TASS]

[Text] Chisinau December 28 TASS—Moldova President Mircea Snegur has chosen toughening taxes as his main method to fight budget deficit in the state budget for 1994 which was approved by the president. For the first time, he included in the budget revenues of non-budgetary funds and cut shares of state resources in budgets of local self-governing bodies.

Mircea Snegur has established that from the new year taxable profits will be indexed at 10 times, and the rate of land tax will become 28 times.

At the same time the proportion of expenditures of social nature in the state budget has been reduced and internal and external state debt service charge has been increased.

Expenditures on centralised capital investments has gone up by two points. A large part of investment resources assigned for forming revocable financing of capital investments and their payment to state enterprises at small percentage. The ratio of incomes and expenses, planned by the president, the deficit of the budget for the next year will not exceed 3.5 per cent of the gross domestic product.

Alignment of Forces Before Elections Assessed

MK2812123093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Dec 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Tago report in the "Moldova" column: "After the Elections the Parliament Will Be Halved. The Parties Are Scrutinizing Each Other but Are in No Hurry To Form Blocs"]

[Text] The parliamentary election campaign in Moldova is gaining momentum. The parliament will include 104 deputies and therefore the struggle is going to be tough (in the present parliament there are 300 deputies).

The first to register its election slate was the Christian Democratic People's Front which, in addition to the front itself, includes the Moldova Volunteers Movement and the Christian Democratic Youth League. Also registered was the election list of the Movement of Victims of Political Reprisals of the Communist Regime. The others—more than 20 political parties and movements—are in no hurry to disclose their lists and register them with the Central Election Commission. The closing registration date is 17 January—that is, 40 days prior to the elections—and apparently the lists of the main participants in the elections campaign will be registered in the last few days.

So far they are sizing each other up, assessing their own and others' forces, and considering proposals on creating election blocs.

Political analysts are unanimous in giving priority to the Agrarian Democratic Party of Moldova. It had a majority in the present parliament and it is not going to cede it in the future. Although the party slate has not been made public yet, it is known to include the party's main leaders: Parliament chairman Petru Luchinksiy; Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli; and some other deputies, chairmen of parliamentary commissions, and government members. The positions of the Republican Party, headed by deputy parliament chairman Viktor Pushkashu, are seen as somewhat weaker but apparently it has fair chances for success. Pushkashu is closer to the program of the Moldovan Agrarian Democratic Party but he is running individually. Potential candidates also have to reckon with the position of the Social Democratic Party of Moldova, one of the leading political forces, which has always had its own opinion on all matters. There were plans to create a strong election bloc uniting these three political forces on the platform of consolidating the independence and statehood of the Moldovan Republic. At the last moment, however, nothing came of it. Either the social democrats were too ambitious, or Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli, who is on the list of agrarians and who dislikes the social democrats, refused to participate in the bloc.... Even so, this does not exclude the possibility of a coalition being formed in parliament.

Taught by the bitter experience of Russia, participants in the Moldova election campaign have become more cautious so as not to leave any chances for success to the ultra-right radicals from the National Front and the Congress of Intellectuals, who are openly or covertly advocating Moldova's unification with Romania. Moreover, Moldova President Mircea Snegur said that he will not maintain neutrality in the elections but give preference to political forces that uphold the independence and statehood of Moldova.

The Congress of Intellectuals is a political force that covertly advocates the idea of unification with Romania and pays lip service to the republic's independence. Using transient slogans and populist promises and saying what the voters would like to hear, the Congress of Intellectuals is trying to get into the republic's parliament while in fact not recognizing its sovereignty. It is also impossible to disregard new political parties in the present election campaign—the Democratic Labor Party and the Reform Party. They have united various people, former political leaders of the former Communist Party and even the People's Front, and they are all hungry for power and possess substantial financial resources. This will play a certain role in the ongoing election campaign in Moldova.

Kazakhstan

Russian Troops To Remain at Baykonur Cosmodrome

LD2812210093 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1930 GMT 28 Dec 93

[From the "Radio Slavyanka" program of the Russian Defense Ministry]

[Text] A Russian military contingent will remain at the Baykonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. The everyday life and activities of the servicemen will be determined by Russia's laws. This is how Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin described to journalists the outcome of the talks between Russia and Kazakhstan's heads of government in Almaty. A memorandum of mutual understanding on issues connected with the functioning of the Baykonur cosmodrome was signed during the talks. The document envisages Russia using other military sites in addition to the cosmodrome by leasing them from Kazakhstan. The Russian military contingents responsible for ensuring the operation of such sites will be on Kazakhstan's territory temporarily. Their status will be determined in a separate agreement.

Nazarbayev Continues Government Reshuffle

Security, Court, Bank Heads Replaced

LD2812160493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1517 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan continues reshuffling within the high echelons of power.

By the decree he published Tuesday [28 December] he appointed as chairman of the Committee for National Security Major-General Sat Tokpakbayev, who earlier occupied the post of the Committee's first deputy chairman. The former chairman, Lieutenant-General Bulat Bayekenov, will become deputy chairman of the Security Council of Kazakhstan, which is headed by Nazarbayev.

By a second decree, also made public Tuesday, Nazarbayev relieved Tomas Aitmukhametov from the post of chairman of Kazakhstan's Supreme Court. He is replaced by Mikhail Malakhov, who was earlier the first deputy chairman of the Supreme Court.

Earlier, Nazarbayev dismissed the chairman of the National Bank, Kalym Bainazarov, and appointed Daulet Sembayev, former First Vice Premier, to the post.

The deputy head of the Semipalatinsk administration, chairman of the republic's union of industrialists and businessmen Akezhan Kazhegeldin, was appointed first Vice Premier.

Security Committee Official Dismissed

LD2812191493 Almaty KAZTAG in Russian 1400 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] By a decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan State Councillor Zhukeyev has been released from his duties as the deputy chairman of the National Committee for Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Cabinet Examines 1994 Social, Economic Plan

LD2812164493 Almaty Kazakh Radio Network in Kazakh 1500 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Sergey Tereshchenko chaired a session of the Presidium of the Cabinet of Ministers today. Under discussion was the indicative plan for the republic's social and economic development in 1994 and a concept for the state's regulation of the economy. The indicative plan is the first attempt at planning while in the process of transition to a market economy. The expertise of Japan, Germany, France, and of other developed countries in planning has been taken into account, as well as the peculiarities of the transitional period and of the introduction of the national currency, the tenge. Despite the fact that it is primarily a recommendation, it still maintains a number of important indices which will ensure the stable functioning of the economy. Summarizing the discussion, Sergey Tereshchenko said that the Cabinet of Ministers should have discussed this plan a long time ago and that more work is needed on it.

We should single out the priority issues and eliminate all factors that impede the development of industry, agriculture, and construction and concentrate our efforts on introducing sophisticated technology. The credit and finance policy should be built more sensibly, and finance should be provided only for those projects that can saturate the market with both industrial and food goods. The construction of facilities that will make a profit in the coming year should continue. The balance in the republic should be of export over import. With regard to duties, their application should become more differentiated and encourage the inflow of progressive equipment and technology.

The session discussed a list of issues to be examined at the session of the Cabinet of Ministers and its presidium during the first quarter of 1994.

Kyrgyzstan

Akayev Holds News Conference on CIS Summit

LD2812183093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 28 Dec 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko]

[Text] President Askar Akayev expressed confidence that the CIS had ceased being an amorphous union and was becoming an efficient working body.

At a news conference in Bishkek Monday [27 December] he emphasized that the entry of Azerbaijan and Georgia would make the Commonwealth stronger and probably bring about peace in those countries.

According to Akayev, CIS leaders knew that, as Russian elections showed, forces existed in the CIS which advocate restoration of totalitarian rule, revival of imperial thinking and phasing out of the democratic reforms. He said that the Russian situation compelled the CIS member state leaders to work for consolidation of the Commonwealth.

Akayev described Russian President Boris Yeltsin as the guarantor of democratic reforms.

The head of the Kyrgyz state said that a set of issues which require non-conventional thinking will be discussed when Yeltsin visits Bishkek next January. These include keeping the Kyrgyz industries going and their conversion to civilian production, "which cannot be imagined without Russia's participation."

In response to INTERFAX's question, Akayev said that the new Kyrgyz cabinet was a "government of national accord." Akayev does not doubt that it will be capable of "implementing the two-year program of profound reform that was approved by parliament." If it fails, "there are mechanisms for forcing the government to resign," the president noted.

He described involvement of communist forces in the new coalition government as "a tactical step" designed to pacify a certain stratum of citizens who want the policy of the executive branch to be more socially-oriented.

The president said that the latest Supreme Soviet session has made a significant contribution to stabilizing the political situation. He emphasized that he had always "advocated political centrism." He had proposed forming a coalition government because there was no other way to achieve a consensus.

To Reintroduce Bill on Dual Citizenship

PM2912140993 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 29 Dec 93 p 1

[Yuriy Razgulyayev report: "A. Akayev in Favor of Dual Citizenship"]

[Text] Bishkek—At a news conference devoted to the results of the Ashgabat meeting of heads of CIS states, Kyrgyzstan President Askar Akayev stated that he will submit a draft law on introducting dual citizenship an upcoming parliament sessions.

A. Akayev recalled that an item on dual citizenship has already been written into the draft treaty on friendship and cooperation with Russia upon his initiative. An attempt was made to enshrine it in the new constitution, but thanks to the efforts of the national-radicals, the matter was overruled. Nor did a proposal on dual citizenship get through at the last session of parliament.

Nevertheless, the president decided to battle determinedly in favor of this constitutional norm. Obviously his stance has been strongly influenced by the migration of the nonindigenous population, which is increasing with every passing month. After all, it is the Russian-speaking population which comprises the backbone of industry, the power sector, and construction.

Tajikistan

Situation Along Afghan Border 'Tense'

Three Opposition Members Detained

LD2912111693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1029 GMT 29 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Gridneva]

[Text] Dushanbe December 29 TASS—Three commandos of the armed Tajik opposition were detained on Tuesday [28 December] evening when attempting to cross the border in the area of the first frontier post of the Ishkashinskiy Frontier Guards unit in the Pamirs. A consignment of narcotics was found when the militants were detained. ITAR-TASS learned this from the information department of the Tajikistan Foreign Ministry. The purpose of the illegal crossing of the border has not yet been established. It is only known that the two detainees come from the former Kurgan-Tyube region of Tajikistan and underwent training in a training center of the opposition in Afghanistan's Tahor province.

The Foreign Ministry representatives, making a reference to informed sources, described the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border as tense. Armed units and equipment are being concentrated along some stretches of the border. Minor provocations continue on the Pyandzh and Moscow [as received] sections of the border. Russian frontier posts come under fire. Individuals and small groups attempt frontier crossings from Afghan territory. A small group of commandos got entrenched in hard-of-access gorges of the Shuroabad district in southern Tajikistan and fire at frontier guards from the rear.

Afghan Consul Comments on Situation

LD2812203993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1837 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Afghan Consul to Tajikistan Mukhammad Umar Asir has stated that the Afghan leadership was doing its best to prevent an armed conflict on the Afghan-Tajik border.

In an interview with INTERFAX, he pointed out that the bilateral border was extremely difficult to control from both sides.

The consul assured that the Afghan authorities had no contacts with the Tajik opposition stationed on their territory. He pointed out that Afghanistan and its president, Borhanoddin Rabbani, have never interfered in internal affairs of other states sticking to the norms of international law.

Asir said the Afghan leadership treated Tajik refugees "only as refugees in accordance with the exercise and observance of their rights."

Rakhmanov Makes Statement to Supreme Soviet

LD2912120693 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 0500 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] Imamali Rakhmanov, head of state and chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Tajikistan, yesterday presented a political statement at the conclusion of the 18th Session of the 12th convocation of the Supreme Soviet.

[Begin Rakhmanov recording] Dear compatriots, as you are aware, since its first days in office, the legitimate government has made its main political and economic goal the establishment of a law-governed, democratic, and secular state, and a transition to a market economy. I ought to say that the state and the government should, before anything, have prepared the political, social, economic and cultural ground for it.

Today we can tell the world community that peace and stability has been established in our land, and the people and authorities have taken hopeful steps for the integrity of the republic and national accord.

Dear compatriots, today the time has come that we should take practical steps in establishing a law-governed, democratic, and secular state. Therefore I, as the head of state, say that a new constitution for the republic will lay the foundation for the creation of this kind of state. Productive work is continuing in this direction, and the draft of the new constitution will be fully published in the coming months. Therefore, I think that the Supreme Soviet should examine the draft of the new constitution and present it for public debate. At the end of the debate, the final draft of the constitution and the presentation of it for a national referendum should be approved.

As far as the time of the referendum is concerned, I say that this should take place not later than June 1994.

The issue of determining the form of the administration of the republic, that is a presidential republic or a parliamentary republic, depends on the adoption of the constitution. After the adoption of the constitution, which will specify the form of administration of the republic, the time and form of elections will be determined.

It is my personal opinion that elections for the higher echelons of state should take place not later than the autumn of 1994. For this to happen, it is necessary that a new law on elections to be adopted and on the basis of that free and democratic elections to be held in the framework of the law.

Dear compatriots, I would like to say a few words on the prospects of the economic life of the republic. I would like to resolutely state that the only way for the future development of our society is the market economy, the basis of which is determined by various forms of ownership. The new constitution of the republic will reflect this new form of economy which will become the foundation for economic legislations.

I want to announce to my compatriots and to the world community that the path we have chosen will lead us towards a true democracy. I, as the head of state, will be the guarantor of implementing this work. I am sure that we will join together and resolve all the issues facing us in the interests of the tranquillity of the people, and once again display unity and unanimity before our people and to prove our worthiness before the people with our practical work. Thank you. [end recording]

New Prime Minister Profiled

MK2912125093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 Dec 93 p 3

[Oleg Panfilov report under the "Tajikistan" rubric: "New Prime Minister Is Unlikely To Change Anything in Country's Economy"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Abduzhalil Samadov, Tajikistan's new head of government, who specializes in theoretical economics, is a representative of the Leninabad community and a son of a former party committee secretary and an opera and ballet theater director. He was first brought into the government in 1990; hitherto he worked as a deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee. Appointed to the post of deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers under President Kakhar Makhkamov, Samadov was fired by another president, Rakhmon Nabiyev. At the time other specialists were also removed from the Council of Ministers, including Koshlakov and Makhkambayev. Subsequently they organized a foreign trade company together with Samadov. Many people saw Samadov's return to the government in November of last year, after Imamali Rakhmonov was elected chief of the Tajikistan Supreme Soviet, as proving his desire to continue working out a concept of economic independence, which he began as early as 1990.

The new appointment, however, is unlikely to spell change or a hope for revitalizing the economy of a half-ruined country. The fact that Samadov was elected by a majority vote (with 164 "Yes" votes out of 194) is unlikely to bring about real change, because theoretical knowledge in a country were 80 percent of enterprises have been destroyed may in practice come up against the managerial nomenklatura's incompetence. The deputies, however, appear to be taking solace only in having been able to maintain parity between the competing clans—those of Leninabad and Kulyab. As for other matters, the situation will apparently not be changing: The opposition will attempt to exert

pressure, including armed pressure, and the power structures will continue reprisals against dissidents. The standoff between the clans will also continue, which was confirmed by the absence at the session of two of the "northerners'" key representatives—Foreign Minister Rashid Alimov and Leninabad Executive Committee Chairman Abduzhalil Khamidov. [passage omitted]

Cultural Agreement Signed With PRC

LD2812163793 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 0100 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] An agreement on cultural cooperation was signed yesterday in Dushanbe between the Republic of Tajikistan and the PRC. The agreement was singed by Tajikistani Culture Minister Ato Hamdam and Xi Zhaoming, PRC ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Republic of Tajikistan.

Turkmenistan

Niyazov Emphasizes National Role in CIS

LD2812221993

[Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 1525 GMT on 28 December carries a 30-minute commentary program "Ashgabat" moderated by an unidentified correspondent featuring excerpts of an interview with Turkmenistan President Saparmurad Niyazov. Commenting on the nature of the CIS, President Niyazov states: "The CIS has played a significant role over the last two years. It has settled, accumulated, and clarified certain relationships among newly formed independent states. Nevertheless, more civilized relations are required."

He then says that the "CIS ought to be an open organization, not a closed one. The spirit of agreement, mutual respect, and respect for each other's opinions must prevail. All decisions taken by the CIS must really be recommendations. The actual decisions and their implementation should be carried out by the people concerned on the basis of recommendations made."

Continuing, Niyazov says he is not implying that Turkmenistan rejects multilateral decisions. He says decisions "can be made on specific issues affecting every state. However, when we are told that there will be a central price regulating mechanism for everyone, this complicates the situation and is not possible. When we are told that we will have a single taxation system, this too is impossible. Each of us has our own budget and our own legislation. That is why the new Commonwealth must be flexible, open, and mutually advantageous."

Niyazov then states that the present organizational situation of the CIS must be taken into account. He notes that Central Asian states are part of a regional organization for economic cooperation, which also includes Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan, as well as Turkmenistan. He notes that often Turkmenistan's participation in CIS sittings is met with suspicion by certain CIS states. He says that "it would be right if countries bordering us, if countries with whom we have direct economic links, could attend these sittings as observers."

He adds that "all parties would gain from taking part. The more we cooperate on the basis of trust; the more we work not just in regional economic commonwealths or organizations, but also in groups of European and American bankers, the more our society will gain. I do not think we should isolate ourselves in the CIS. We must not be a closed organization. We should be one of the components of the civilized world community."

Prime Minister Niyazov's next comments concern the economic future of Turkmenistan. He says Turkmenistan wants to cooperate with all CIS member states and all countries bordering it. Commenting on long-range economic prospects, Niyazov says: "Ten years will be enough to carry out an economic reform, provide social protection for the population, and more clearly identify the possibilities for society's development. The main effort will be on changing people's mentality, not on resolving some physical matters. People themselves must realize and accept a way for society's development proposed by us."

Niyazov Opposes Amending Constitution

LD2812203093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1942 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] The joint session of the parliament and the People's Council of Turkmenistan (the highest representative body of the people's power) decided to hold a nation-wide referendum on January 15, 1994. There will be one question —on extension of the constitutional term of powers of President Saparmurad Niyazov.

The Turkmen Democratic Party initiated the extension of Niyazov's presidential powers from 5 to 10 years in early December (in accordance with the Constitution the president cannot be elected for more than two 5-year terms in succession).

First Secretary of the party's Political Council, Onjuk Musayev, said in an interview with INTERFAX that the party had proposed this as an amendment to the Constitution. In accordance with the republic's law, the amendment will enter into effect after it is adopted by the parliament and confirmed by the People's Council.

According to Musayev, "very few people doubt that Niyazov will be elected for the second term after the expiration of his powers in June, 1997. There may be 100-150 people against this." This is to say that there is no reason to distract the president for the elections. It is more reasonable to let him carry out his reforms.

Speaking in the parliament, Niyazov proposed that the amendment not be adopted. In his opinion, Turkmenistan is establishing a legal atmosphere in which everyone, including the president, must observe the Constitution.

Most of the deputies rejected the proposal of Niyazov saying that the alteration of the term of powers was an "unordinary [as received] decision" like the introduction of the national currency and the adoption of the law on dual citizenship.

Vice Premier Valeriy Otchertsov stated a compromise proposal to make the issue on extension of the presidential powers a subject for a nation-wide referendum on January 15. The results of the referendum are to be summed up at a session of the People's Council on January 18.

Uzbekistan

Karimov Addresses Supreme Council on Economy

LD2912144393 Tashkent Radio Tashkent Network in Russian 0600 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Address by President Islam Karimov to the Supreme Council in Tashkent; date not given—live or recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage indistinct] When we go to a shop we have to buy at the established rate, but if [words indistinct] our living will worsen by twofold. Therefore, the appropriate money, its amount, compared with the previous money; for example for introducing sum coupons, the new currency, there are all sorts of opinions—one to 1000, one to 501 to 200 and so on. [as heard] We have to think about all this comprehensively. If it is one to 1000 what does it respond to? How will it be compared with dollar? How will it be in terms of Russian money? [sentence indistinct]

There are rumors about Russian money being changed. Russia has introduced its own money. While this is the case, how should we put our sum against the new Russian money? We should think about this question profoundly and [words indistinct] comprehensively.

If we have to change the sum coupon, we have to do it correctly. The sum coupon is ours. The sum coupon does not exist outside the borders of Uzbekistan. From this point of view, now when we change this money, this sum coupon, there will be one difference; if the money which has lost its force continues to flow, the sky is the limit for the price in the market. When the money increases, of course, the prices go up. [sentence indistinct] When this is the case, what is the reason for it? Indeed, a large amount of money flowed in.

Now, the situation today—the sum coupon is ours. We produce the sum coupon ourselves. We ourselves establish the rate, the amount, and volume of the sum coupon. While this is the case we created the easiest conditions. [passage indistinct]

There is only one difficulty. If we have goods in our market, everything will be good. If the money changes, nobody should worry. Whatever they have in their hands in terms of sum coupon, we will change them all—one hundred percent. If they have money in the bank we will of course in time change them to new currency and put them in the hands of people.

At present there is no reason to worry. Recently the head of our banks said: Tell the people there is no reason to worry. We have given you this currency. We have given it, and we are responsible ourselves . For this reason, if there is any demand, if it is an appropriate and legal demand, we will immediately fulfill our duty. If we all understand this question correctly, and take this policy to the end, I believe that in the first half of 1994 we will conclude all our preparatory work . In this way, it will be possible for us to pass on to our real national currency .

Dear friends, people's deputies, your wish and our wish is to see our homeland free and prosperous, to make life in our country prosperous and to do the appropriate work to fulfill this task. It is an obligation and happiness to work for such a lofty aim. During the short period of God-given life, man experiences all sorts of tests and difficulties. Think once. The people and the homeland suffers from the difficulties today. However, religion, faith, and life do not change. May God protect us all against one thing; may we never regret whatever we have done and suffer a guilty conscience. Guilt of conscience is the worst of all.

On the eve the coming new year of 1994, at the last minutes of the current year, as a human being, as a Muslim who has entered the Holy House of God and entered Kaaba, I ask our creator to give peace and order to our country. I wish our young people to have patience and tolerance, and zeal and effort, and that our elders have a long life and strength, and I wish all families happiness and abundance. [applause] [passage omitted]

Legislature Approves Bill on Parliamentary Elections

LD2812160193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1440 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] At its Tuesday's [28 December] session in Tashkent the Uzbek parliament approved a bill on parliamentary elections which will be held next summer, when the mandates of the present deputies expire.

Under the bill the new Uzbek parliament will comprise 150 deputies, instead of today's 500. All political parties and government bodies will have the right to nominate their candidates. The Army, the Interior Ministry, the security service, religious figures and parties formed on the basis of religion have no right to nominate their representatives. Officials can run for parliament on the condition that they give up their posts after being elected.

The same day, Uzbekistan's legislature approved bills on taxes levied on the property of individuals and on income tax. In addition, it issued a resolution on the main parameters of next year's budget.

Under the 1994 budget the revenues are to make up 5,181.8 Bn rubles, and the expenditure 5,619.3 Bn. The budget deficit will amount to 5% of the Gross National Product.

Armenia

Azerbaijanis Continue Offensive, Occupy Heights

NC2812145493 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1400 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] The situation remains tense in the Karabakh conflict zone. The Azerbaijani Army units are incessantly launching attacks against the positions of the Karabakh forces in the eastern and northeastern sectors of the war front.

The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] Defense Army's press service reported that, after an intense artillery and rocket barrage this morning, the Azerbaijani troops resumed their offensive against Talish in Mardakertskiy Rayon as well as towards Agdam and Askeran.

Despite stiff resistance by the Karabakh forces and despite suffering considerable losses of men and equipment, the enemy is not giving up its intention to break through Karabakh's defensive line in the named regions. According to reports, heavy battles were continuing in the eastern and northern NKR as of noon on 28 December with mixed results. The Azerbaijani troops managed to occupy a number of heights on the way to Mardakert, Agdam, and Askeran. Both sides suffered losses.

According to intercepted radio communications, there are deterrent detachments behind the Azerbaijani troops to shoot any deserting servicemen on the spot. According to the same source, foreign mercenaries, particularly Afghan mojahedin, are actively taking part in the battles against the Karabakh forces.

New Fighting Erupts in NKR

NC2812181693 Paris AFP in English 1628 GMT 28 Dec 93

[By Anna Mkrtchian]

[Text] Yerevan, Dec 28 (AFP)—Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh lost ground Tuesday [28 December] to Azerbaijani troops backed by tanks attacking at key points along a broad front north, east and south of the enclave causing heavy casualties on both sides, officials said.

It was the first important setback in nearly a year for Armenian forces who since last March conquered all of Nagorno-Karabakh as well as vast areas of western and southwestern Azerbaijan surrounding the enclave.

A spokesman for the Nagorno-Karabakh Self-Defense Forces, reached by telephone in Stepanakert, said Armenian troops were forced to withdraw from strategic heights overlooking the Azerbaijani city of Agdam, located just to the east of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The self-styled foreign ministry of Nagorno-Karabakh said in a statement that Azerbaijani forces had occupied heights north and northeast of the enclave.

The Russian foreign ministry meanwhile denounced the surge of fighting in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and expressed alarm at the deployment by one of the warring sides of mercenaries "known for their extremism."

Ministry spokesman Grigoriy Karasin declined to name either side but accused "one of the conflicting parties" of seeking to gain advantages on the ground.

His reference to extremist mercenaries came shortly after the Armenian spokesman in Nagorno-Karabakh attributed successful attacks by the Azerbaijani army to use of Afghan mojahedin and to new orders that frontline deserters be executed on the spot.

Both Armenian and Azerbaijani officials admitted casualties in the past day of fighting had been high on both sides, but neither could give detailed figures.

Both sides also traded accusations on the origin of the latest flare in the six-year war over Nagorno-Karabakh and each accused the other of undermining peace talks.

"The aggression of Azerbaijan threatens to lead to uncontrolled enlargement of the fighting," the Nagorno-Karabakh foreign ministry statement said.

"If the escalation of the fighting is not halted, the leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh reserves the right to take adequate steps to neutralize the threat to the civilian population," it added.

Reports from both sides indicated that much of the fighting was taking place outside of Nagorno-Karabakh proper along frontlines established by Armenian forces earlier this year that created a "buffer zone" to the east of the enclave.

The Azerbaijani defense ministry said Armenian forces attempted to seize the Agburun heights that would give them control over most of the region of Beylegan, several kilometers southeast of Nagorno-Karabakh, INTERFAX news agency said.

The ministry said four Azerbaijani civilians were killed and a dozen homes destroyed when the Azerbaijani village of Ter-Ter northeast of the enclave came under rocket attack from Armenian forces late Monday.

The "foreign ministry" of Nagorno-Karabakh said Armenian troops were carrying out "difficult defensive operations" to repell Azerbaijani attacks in the regions of Askeranskiy, Gadrutskiy and Martuninskiy.

Azerbaijani combat aircraft had renewed overflights of the combat zone and Armenian troops were bracing for the planes to be used to support Azerbaijani ground troops, the statement said.

The "defense ministry" of Nagorno-Karabakh spoke of intense fighting at Marzeli, about 12 kilometers southwest of Agdam, and said Armenian troops had abandoned the village of Madagis north of the enclave.

More than 15,000 people have been killed in the war over Nagorno- Karabakh, an enclave that technically remains part of Moslem- dominated Azerbaijan but which is populated by Christian Armenians who have claimed independence.

Karabakh Foreign Ministry Statement

NC2812190393 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1800 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Statement issued by Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Foreign Ministry; date not given]

[Text] For the last eight days, the Azerbaijani armed formations, supported by scores of armored cars, have been constantly attacking the positions of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] Defense Army virtually all along the confrontation line. They occupied Magavuz in Mardakertskiy Rayon, as well as a number of strategic heights in the north and northeast of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The NKR armed forces are waging heavy defensive battles in the direction of Askeranskiy, Gadrutskiy and Martuninskiy Rayons.

The helicopters belonging to the Azerbaijani Air Force resumed their military flights. It is expected that the ground operations will be augmented by the use of military planes against the NKR Defense Army forces and settlements in Karabakh.

It appears from all the above that Azerbaijan is implementing a premeditated massive offensive.

Having forecast such a development, the NKR leadership had on many occasions drawn the international community's attention to the hypocrisy and duplicity of Baku authorities, who are using the peace processes for the preparation of new military operations. Azerbaijan's operations are threatening each and every peace effort. The periodic violation of the results of the peace talks by Baku authorities, who have pinned their hopes on [words indistinct], negatively effects the prestige of the international organizations and mediating countries and bring to naught attempts to peacefully resolve the conflict.

Azerbaijan's aggression may lead to the uncontrolled expansion of massive military operations. If the escalation of the military operations in the region is not halted, then the NKR leadership reserves the right to take appropriate measures to neutralize the danger threatening the peaceful population of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Commission on Karabakh Statement

NC2812190593 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1800 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Armenian Supreme Council Special Commission on Nagorno- Karabakh issued a statement today. The statement says:

Once again violating the cease-fire established through Russian mediation on 21 December, the Azerbaijani Army launched a large-scale offensive against Mardakertskiy and Martuninskiy rayons in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

The behavior of the Azerbaijani side is nothing new. By renouncing political dialogue, it is trying to solve the problem through military force.

But what is astonishing and deplorable is that alongside the Afghan mojahedin and Turkish advisers and trainers, Russian military experts are also taking part in the offensive in the ranks of the Azerbaijani Army.

The Azerbaijani agents are freely enlisting hundreds of Russian citizens in Russia, who are immediately appearing on the war front in the ranks of the Azerbaijani Army.

The (?Supreme Council Commission) wants to draw the attention of the Russian authorities to this fact and expects them to take appropriate measures. The participation of Russian citizens in the Karabakh conflict will have a negative effect on Russia's prestige, and it does not befit the responsibilities it has assumed on international level and within the CIS. It could also seriously damage its peacemaking mission.

President Phones Aliyev, Demands Halt to Shelling

NC2912143793 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1400 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] We have just received the following statement from the Armenian presidential press service:

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan held a telephone conversation today with Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze. They examined matters related to the transportation of freight to Armenia via Georgia and the repairs to the gas pipeline.

The Republic's president also held four telephone conversations today with Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev during which he demanded an immediate halt to the shelling of Noyemberyanskiy, Idzhevanskiy, and Tavushskiy Rayons and warned that, if the shelling does not stop, Armenia will be forced to resort to retaliatory measures.

Gas Supplies Halted; Almost No Electricity

LD2812171793 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1600 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] The people of Armenia have been left practically without electricity. On Monday in many districts of Yerevan there was no light even during the designated one hour a day. INTERFAX reports that the reason is the halting of supplies of gas, used to generate the electricity. Most of the electricity is being supplied to enterprises. Owing to gas supply problems bakeries are closing in Yerevan.

Head of Parliament Returns From Mideast Trip

NC2812192393 Yerevan SNARK in English 1853 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Yerevan, December 28. (SNARK)—Today Babken Ararktsyan, the head of Armenian Parliament, comes back to Yerevan from Near East. SNARK was informed in the Press-Center of Armenian Parliament during the speaker's visit to Syria and Lebanon the agreements between Armenian Parliaments and parliaments of these countries were signed.

Azerbaijan

Attack by Armenian Forces Near Beylagan Reported

NC2812184093 Baku TURAN in English 1416 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Baku, December 28, TURAN—According by information received from firing zone, yesterday Armenian Army resumed the attack after a short-term break. Azeri forces repel the attacks of the enemy in Ter-Ter and Beylagan directions.

Yesterday Ter-Ter town and village of Talish, that is in the north of Karabakh, were shelled from howitzers and Grad plants. During the second firing, Armenian forces also used anti-tank rockets fagot. [sentence as received] As a result of firing three buildings and seven dwellings houses have been damaged. Four peaceful citizens have been killed.

December 27 after noon, Armenian forces, using 9 tanks and two infantry companies, launched an attack towards the south of Ter-Ter along the motor road Agdam-Barda. But they were stopped at the village of Shikhlar and were compelled to draw off to their previous positions.

Yesterday during the whole day, Armenian artillery have been bombarding the positions of Azeri Army in Beylagan direction, trying at the same time to take the top-hill Agburun. According to military experts, if Armenian Army take the top-hill, it will be able to control the situation in this direction and shell Beylagan city. Last evening, December 27, the firings in Agburun continued. According to Defense Ministry of Azerbaijan, recently Armenia have been transporting the forces to Karabakh. Possibly, it tries to meet a lack of military hardware as since December 10 Armenian Army have been launching a series of attacks on the west of Azerbaijan.

Latest Reports from Beylaganskiy

NC2812184993 Baku Radio Baku International Service in Azeri 1300 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary: "Echoes of the Fighting in Beylaganskiy Rayon"]

[Text] The latest developments in Azerbaijan's Beylaganskiy Rayon have created a new stage in the prolonged dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It will be recalled that the Azerbaijan National Army [ANA] suffered consecutive defeats in the past. Consequently, more tnan 20 percent of our republic's terroritory has been occupied and more than 1 million people have become refugees.

It would have been meaningless to talk about a well-organized and well-trained fighting army during the past few years. The organization of the Republic's army took a long time because of [words indistinct], negligence of commanders, and sensitive [words indistinct]. The ANA units were a force on paper. Describing ANA as a fighting unit was difficult. Nevertheless, our patriotic fighters were eager to defend the homeland. However, the lack of experience, the shortage of professional fighters, and the absence of [words indistinct] rendered their effort ineffective. Consequently, the Republic suffered many misfortunes.

Baku made an effort during the past six years to remove the fear created by the activities of the Armenian armed units, [words indistinct], and inform the world about the incidents in the region. Azerbaijan's leaders urged the United Nations to describe Armenia as an aggressor country and move to end aggression and have the occupied territories liberated. The international community had to be informed on Armenia's policy of ethnic cleansing and usurpation of territories. Unfortunately, however, there is little information in other countries about all that.

The UN Security Council has adopted several resolutions on the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Furthermore, it has drawn up proposals to end the confrontation. However, none of them have had any effect on the Armenian side. Armenia has maintained its policy of aggression against Azerbaijan. In fact, it has used several types of arms that have been banned by the UN organization.

The enemy has tried to launch new attacks several times. The most recent attempt was in Beylaganskiy Rayon. The outcome of that attack is common knowledge. The Armenian military units were forced to retreat as a result of the determined stand of Azerbaijan's fighters. Our

military units inflicted heavy blows on the enemy. Several tanks were disabled and captured. The bodies of many Armenian troops lay in the battlefronts.

A similar development took place in Azerbaijan's Fizulinskiy Rayon a few days later. The ANA units strongly confronted the Armenian Armed Forces and inflicted casualties on them.

The question that should be asked is whether or not the Armenian Armed Forces have lost their fighting capability. No, that is not the case. The ANA units are now becoming more and more capable of carrying out combat operations to liberate their homeland from the enemy.

Defense Ministry Statement

NC2912065293 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 0400 GMT 29 Dec 93

["Text" of a statement issued by the Ministry of Defense on 28 December]

[Text] Despite Azerbaijan's military subunits heroic rebuff of the Armenian Armed Forces' attacks during the past few days, the enemy continues its onslaughts.

The Armenian military units tried to realize their ulterior motives against Gorenboyskiy, Terterskiy, and Agdamskiy Rayons on 28 December. But the [words indistinct] foiled their attempts. The enemy units were forced to retreat after abandoning numerous military vehicles and a lot of equipment at the battlefront. Azerbaijan's fighters destroyed two tanks, an armored vehicle, and three pieces of 120-mm artillery near Terter and two tanks, three armored vehicles, two mortars, two pieces of artillery, a [word indistinct], a vehicle used by a military center, and a large military depot near Gorenboyskiy Rayon.

The fighting spirit of our officers and men is high. They are adding new pages to our people's heroic history. On behalf of all our people, we applaud our homeland's fighters at this difficult time in our Republic.

Foreign Ministry Views Aliyev's Foreign Visits

NC2812185393 Baku Radio Baku International Service in Azeri 1300 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] The Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Affairs has held a news conference on the outcome of President Geydar Aliyev's visit to France and his participation in the CIS summit in Ashgabat. The diplomats have described his visit to France and participation in the CIS summit as very fruitful. President Mitterrand has said that France will not agree to the occupation of territories by force. The Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Affairs is convinced that France, which is a UN Security Council member, has a certain responsibility in the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Speaking in the CIS summit in Ashgabat, President Aliyev urged the CIS countries to fulfill their obligations toward Azerbaijan. His call was described in the press conference as an important and timely initiative.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has assessed Azerbaijan's proposal in the Ashgabat meeting of the CIS Council of Ministers for the amendment of the collective security agreement as an important approach. The proposal called for the amendment of that agreement in a way that will provide for an effort, including the process of negotiations, to remove an armed dispute in the CIS.

Religious Leader Asks for World Muslim Help

NC2812190793 Baku TURAN in English 1416 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Baku December 28 (TURAN)—On the threshold of the holiday—the day of solidarity of the Azeris of the whole world, the leader of spiritual department of Moslems of the Caucasus, Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukyur Pashazadeh addressed an appeal to all the Moslems and Azeris of the world to help Azerbaijan to prevent Armenian aggression and to restore peace in the region.

Azerbaijani nation must unite in the face of Armenian aggression and considerable losses of the territories of the country. Our soil and holy things have been trampled, said Sheikh-ul-Islam to a TURAN's correspondent.

Allahshukyur Pashazadeh stressed that believers in different countries of the world concerned about the victims of the conflict. Recently, World Council of Churches has sent to the Republic 2,500 kilos of humanitarian cargo with medicines.

Turkmenistan Increases Gas Deliveries

NC2812185193 Baku TURAN in English 1416 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Baku, December 28 (TURAN)—From December 24 Turkmenistan increased daily gas deliveries to Azerbaijan by an additional 2 million cub. metres. Now the deliveries of gas amount to 12 million cub. metres. The vice-president of state company Azerigas, Aydin Amanov, said that this increase of delivery will contribute to normal functioning of all Azeri electric power stations.

The increase of gas deliveries followed after the talks between the President Aliyev and Turkmenistani President Saparmurat Niyazov in Ashgabat.

Azerbaijan receives gas on clearing base. According to Aydin Amanov, it is more advantageous than to buy gas on hard currency. At present the talks concerning the delivery of 3 billion cub. metres of gas from Turkmenistan in 1994 have been conducting.

Georgia

Defense Minister Rumored To Join Opposition

PM2812163993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Dec 93 First Edition p 1

[Report by Yekaterina Akhalkatsi: "Coup Possible in Georgia"]

[Text] Tbilisi—Rumors are circulating in Tbilisi that Major General Georgiy Karkarashvili, Georgian defense minister, has followed the example of former Minister Tengiz Kitovani and, accompanied by "his" people and a number of APC's, has gone to Tbilisi reservoir. It is being said in the city that the reason for this is the incident which occurred at Tbilisi airport 24 December. Now that the minister has joined the opposition, Tbilisi is expecting a military coup.

In the morning of 28 December staffers at the Georgian Security Ministry confirmed by telephone the report that the defense minister has gone over to the opposition. In the words of Tedo Dzhaparidze, the head of state's security adviser, he knows nothing about this. Staffers of the Tbilisi Military Commandant's Office and the apparatus of the Georgian commander of internal troops gave the same reply.

The conflict between the leaders of the power ministries is not leaving people of Tbilisi unaffected. The situation in the city remains tense. In the evening of 27 December forces of the Rustavi "mkhedrioni" subdivision—the Georgian rescue corps—were brought into Tbilisi. The parliament building has been under guard by their APC's since then.

Let me remind you of the nub of the conflict. Security Minister Major General Igor Giorgadze blamed Maj. Gen. Georgiy Karkarashvili for the loss of Abkhazia, accused him of supporting revanchists, and also stated that it was his fault that the Ashgabat military treaty was not signed and threatened to arrest him. In reply Karkarashvili described as suspicious the fact that Igor Giorgadze personally was in charge of the headquarters in Senaki which fell into the hands of the former president's supporters in mysterious circumstances.

Head of State E. Shevardnadze has set up a government commission to carry out the prompt investigation of an explosion at a Security Ministry directorate building, a blast which had serious consequences. This explosion was a consequence of the conflict between the leaders of these ministries.

Presidential Source Denies Rumors

LD2812204493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1837 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] A source close to the Georgian president today told INTERFAX that the rumors of a confrontation between the defense and security ministries spread by some mass media were lacking any grounds.

Prior to this, the mass media said that the explosions in the republican capital of Tbilisi on December 24-25 leaving two persons wounded were the result of a conflict between two ministers—Defense Minister G.Karakashvili and Security Minister I. Georgiadze which has grown into an "armed confrontation."

The Defense Ministry said deputy defense and security ministers met on December 27-28 to settle many of the disputable issues.

A special state commission is investigating the details of the incidents last weekend and will submit its finding to the republican leadership in the near future.

Defense Ministry Denies Rift

LD2912111793 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 0600 GMT 29 Dec 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The Georgian Defense Ministry has stated that reports circulated by some mass media on the confrontation between the republic's Defense and Security Ministries are completely unfounded. According to the Defense Ministry, deputy ministers for defense and security had meetings on 27 and 28 December, at which many contentious issues were settled.

However, the ANI agency quotes the press center of the Georgian Security Ministry as saying that Defense Minister Karkarashvili has taken some units loyal to him to Tbilisi Sea, where the opposition is allegedly assembling.

The press center of the Georgian Defense Ministry in its turn reports that Karkarashvili is in his office, and that rumors are being spread to the effect that a coup is allegedly being prepared in the republic.

Shevardnadze Stresses Need for Western Aid

LD2912091793 Berlin DDP/ADN in German 0816 GMT 29 Dec 93

[Text] Tbilisi (DDP/ADN)—According to Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze, Western aid is saving the Caucasian republic from a famine with many victims this winter. "The country will continue to need the help of the United States, Germany, and the other major industrialized countries to overcome its crisis," Shevardnadze said in Tbilisi today in an interview with DDP/ADN news agency.

The Caucasian republic does not want alms, but is aiming for cooperation on the basis of equality that benefits all the parties involved. "Georgia will continue along the path of reform despite all its economic and political problems," Shevardnadze said.

The republic has the political forces to bring about democratic conditions.

He said a new draft constitution is being worked on, which enumerates people's rights and liberties as well as

the basis for the development of democracy in the former Soviet republic. The people will decide whether to approve the constitution in a referendum in early 1994. "The document will guarantee all nationalities, including the Abkhaz and Ossetians, equal rights," Shevardnadze stressed. At the same time, the president left no doubt that he will not allow regions to secede from the Caucasian republic.

Abkhazian Deputy Chairman Criticizes Adamishin

LD2812154893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1515 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] First Deputy Chairman of the Abkhazian parliament, Stanislav Lakoba, evaluated the statement made by Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Adamishin in Tbilisi as contrary to the agreements reached at the Georgian-Abkhazian negotiations in Geneva on November 30-December 1.

During the visit to Tbilisi on December 26-27, Adamishin said that Russia supported the territorial integrity of Georgia.

Lakoba pointed out in an interview with Interfax that the statement of Adamishin also contradicted the results of the recent meeting of experts in Moscow which had worked out recommendations on the future political status of Abkhazia.

Lakoba emphasized that the future political status of Abkhazia would be determined by its people at a referendum which is to take place in 1994.

Abkhaz Government Statement Protests Attacks

LD2812220793 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 2035 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Statement by the Abkhaz Council of Ministers issued in Tbilisi; date not given]

[Text] [Word indistinct] in December, Abkhaz separatists carried out new vandalism actions in the territory of Gali rayon. Over 500 armed bandits burned down a number of villages situated along the Black Sea coast and the Enguri River bank. According to still incomplete reports, about 150 people were brutally tortured and killed, mostly sick and disabled elderly and women whose bodies were left on the highways and in gardens for a long time. About 1,210 houses and private or state-owned establishments were burned down.

The whole region, which comprises two-thirds of the whole populated territory of the rayon, has been devastated. The aggressors have driven the remaining population away from a temporarily occupied territory and totally looted the houses, enterprises, and offices. They have driven the cattle away. Even women and children have been taking part en masse in the looting.

Murderers and sadists have taken hundreds of men and women prisoners from the mentioned villages. Human trade has been reported.

Strongly protesting the new tragedy committed by Abkhaz separatists in Gali rayon with particular brutality and sadism, we claim that an outrageous crime is being continued and this is not only an irredeemable shame for the Abkhazis of all generations but also a black stain on the 20th century history of mankind.

[Signed] Zurab Erkvania, chairman of the [Abkhaz] Council of Ministers

Zviadists Surrendering; Situation 'Stabilizing'

LD2812144593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Over 100 supporters of the ex-president Zviad Gamsakhurdia have surrendered to authorities over the past week, a spokesman for the Georgian Interior Ministry has told INTERFAX. Seeing that their struggle has no prospects, Zviadists are ceasing resistance and surrendering arms, said the spokesman.

Not one of the Zviadists has been detained, he said. They all surrendered arms and returned to their families.

The spokesman said that in the Chkhorotsku area alone they surrendered about 150 submachine guns, 2 tanks, 4 rocket launchers, 2 armored personnel carriers, the anti-aircraft installation "Shilka," 2 "Grad" installations and large amounts of ammunition. All this became possible thanks to talks with the Zviadists conducted by the "Mkhedrioni" leader Jaba Ioseliani and leaders of "power" ministries.

Meanwhile, unofficial sources have told INTERFAX that while surrendering arms, Zviadists laid down conditions before the authorities according to which the surrendered arms and the military technology should stay in the Chkhorotsku area and they should be under control of Zviadists jointly with units of the Georgian Defense Ministry. The demand was accepted by the authorities.

The spokesman for the Russian military contingent in the Caucasus, Colonel Dolgachev, has told INTERFAX that the situation in western Georgia was stabilizing. He said in December there were no railway incidents in western Georgia that are under the Russian troops control. He said that Russian troops continue protecting the railway at the Samtredia-Poti section. "It will be guarded until the Georgian leadership asks us to stop," said the spokesman.

Estonia

Laar, Velliste Discuss Russian Troop Withdrawal

WS2912103793 Tallinn BNS in English 1820 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Tallinn, Dec 28, BNS - The Estonian government agrees in principle to Russia's proposal to withdraw its troops from the country by Aug. 31, 1994, Prime Minister Mart Laar said in a press conference after today's meeting of his Cabinet.

But he said the government's final decision still depended on a timetable for the process, which Russia until now has failed to present. Laar said the timetable had to include definite deadlines for the withdrawal of each separate army unit. Estonia also sticks to its demand that the Russian attack units must be the first to leave, he said.

The largest Russian attack unit still stationed in Estonia is the 144th armored infantry division with headquarters in Tallinn. The division is still reported to have about 1,000 military in its bases in Tallinn and the small towns of Klooga and Keila to the west of the capital. The process of withdrawal of the division has slowed down to near zero during the past two months.

Speaking about the dismantling of the nuclear training reactors at the Paldiski base, the prime minister said it was technically impossible to take the reactors out of the country by Aug. 31. Thus, the issue has to be settled under a separate agreement.

"The (proposed deadline of) Aug. 31, 1994, shows that Russia has to have some sort of timetable ready and we are looking forward to seeing it," the Estonian prime minister said. He said he hoped Russia would present the timetable in the near future so that the document could be discussed at bilateral negotiations between the countries.

Laar also expressed the hope that Russia is serious about the final deadline.

He said a number of foreign countries had offered financial aid to build houses for the repatriated Russian military. But he said the money could be used only after a timetable for the withdrawal has been signed.

Estonian Foreign Minister Trivimi Velliste in an interview with the Associated Press said Estonia could agree to the conditions set by Russia only if the majority of the remaining 2,400 Russian troops left the country in the beginning of 1994. Velliste pointed out the some 1,000-strong attack force, which he said was the main threat to Estonia's security.

The foreign minister also said the withdrawal of Russian troops needed to be more dynamic.

He insisted that the troops also left the Paldiski base by the same deadline. But he said it was clear that the two nuclear reactors there couldn't be dismantled by August.

"This would be impossible in the technical respect," Velliste said. "But we want to see the Estonian flag fly there," he said.

Estonia so far has demanded that the Russian troops be pulled out by the end of 1993. Estonia showed little enthusiasm when Russia last month proposed the August deadline, which Moscow also linked to a number of additional conditions.

At present, more than 70 Russian military units are still stationed in Estonia, most of them in Tallinn and the surrounding Harju region. Twelve of Estonia's counties have no more Russian military presence on their soil.

Laar: No Comment on Possible Cabinet Changes

WS2912103893 Tallinn BNS in English 1618 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Tallinn, Dec 28, BNS—Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar today said he wouldn't elaborate on possible changes in the government before the potential minister candidates have been approved by the coalition partners.

The HOMMIKULEHT daily newspaper in its today's edition says the government is to begin the next year with the replacement of four Cabinet ministers. [passage omitted]

The prime minister declined to comment on the scheme predicted by the newspaper.

"Many minister replacements have been discussed within the Pro Patria (party). Also all the names published in the HOMMIKULEHT have been mentioned in the discussions. But the changes to be made in the government must get the final approval from the coalition council," Laar said.

HOMMIKULEHT in the article also says the changes are to take place still before the New Year's first meeting of the parliament on Jan. 10, so that the new ministers could be sworn in at once.

Latvia

'Expert' Comments on Russian Army Withdrawal

LD2812122093 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2100 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Juris Dobelis, an expert in army withdrawal issues from the Saeima investigation commission, believes only the Saeima and not the government can change a resolution passed by the Supreme Council on 15 September 1992 and extend the deadline by which Russian troops should leave Latvia.

According to the Supreme Council resolution of 15 September 1992, Russia has to complete the withdrawal of its troops from Latvia in 1993.

Dobelis considers the Council of Ministers practically extended the deadline for the withdrawal of the Russian Army by deciding at its 21 December session to extend permission for Russian military personnel to stay in Latvia until 31 December this year, and also to extend permission for traffic of military vehicles until 31 March 1994.

According to Dobelis, the results of the election in Russia have not affected the course of the army withdrawal, and the troops are still leaving Latvia slowly but steadily.

At the moment, from an original figure of about 70,000 Russian soldiers, there are still about 10,000 military personnel left in Latvia.

According to information at Dobelis' disposal, half of Latvia's districts are now completely free from the Russian troops. There are no longer any military facilities left in Limbazi, Cesis, Valka, Valmiera, Gulbene, Ludza, Preili, Talsi, Saldus, Bauskas, Balvi, Tukums, and Aizkraukle districts.

Draft Skrunda Agreement Compared to 'Ultimatum'

PM2712160193 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Dec 93 p 3

[Report by Valeriy Gromak: "Are Two Flags Necessary There? The Skrunda Radar Station Has Become a Stumbling Block at the Russian-Latvian Talks"]

[Text] As KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has already reported, the latest round of Russian-Latvian talks scheduled for 20-21 December in Moscow has been postponed until the first half of January 1994 on the Russian side's initiative. Clearly such a turn of events was not unexpected for Riga. "The Russian election results compel Latvia to be more cautious when concluding any agreements with Russia," Aleksandrs Kirshteyns, member of the Latvian Government delegation at the talks with Russia and representative of the Latvian Saeima Foreign Affairs Commission, stated.

As is well known, Russia and Latvia have still not reached mutual understanding on the question of the Skrunda radar station. Latvia's position is reflected in the draft treaty between the two countries' governments entitled "On the Legal Status of the Skrunda Radar Station During its Dismantling." This document contains 20 articles, some of which are most intriguing. For example, Russia has to pay rent for the land "granted for temporary use." Unless that money is paid before the 20th day of each month Russia will pay Latvia compensation of the order of 5 percent for each day in arrears. In the event of any failure to make three monthly payments in a row or if the total of the debt is equal to three monthly payments of any type the "period of dismantling of the station" will begin. In that event the right of ownership of the equipment located on the site of the installation passes to Latvia. Furthermore, the beginning of the period of the dismantling "does not release the Russian Federation Government from the settlement of the debt."

The draft agreement lays down that Russia wil pay not only for the lease of the land but also for the "right to the temporary location of the facility." In the Latvian side's opinion, the duty of the protection of the installation is to be borne by it [na neye]. The government of the republic has appointed its own agent to monitor the activity of the station and that agent, like the members of the Latvian Saeima and government, has the right of unhindered access to the station. And of course both states' flags are to be hoisted over Skrunda.

In my view the text of the draft is reminiscent of an ultimatum. This is nothing more than horse-trading and it seems that Latvia has decided to extract the maximum advantage out of the installation in Skrunda.

Finance Minister Assesses 1993 Developments

LD2812173893 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1400 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Latvian Finance Minister Uldis Osis, State Minister for Budget Janis Platais, State Minister for Property Edmunds Krastins, and Vanda Gurkovska, deputy head of the revenue service, met reporters at the Finance Ministry today to analyze the financial situation in the country.

Osis describes financial developments this year as follows:

[Begin Osis recording] The passing year is perhaps marked, regarding finance, by two important factors. First of all, it could be said that 1993 was a year of the lats, we completely switched over to our permanent national currency. The second most important factor would be, in my opinion, the fact that it was a year of economic stabilization, the year when we managed to save the state from economic and financial chaos—which can currently be seen in practically all the states of the former USSR with the exception of the Baltic states—when we stopped the economic decline, the decline in production and the worsening standard of living of at least a major part of the population, which had been characteristic of the previous period. It was necessary to pay for that and at times it was necessary to pay dearly with the increases in tax turnover and excise duty, but at the same time it made it possible to implement the policy of stabilization and the economic policy declared by the government.

Speaking of future financial policy, according to our program of macro-economic stabilization, we predict that beginning next year [word indistinct] increase in the gross domestic product, gradual economic recovery. For example, we put the idea that by the year 2000 the gross domestic product will grow on average by five percent a year in permanent comparable prices.

Speaking of the budget, unfortunately, for the time being, that is in 1994, budgetary means are very limited to stimulate the pace of such a recovery in the national economy. Our means are limited for investment. I would say that the budget is mainly geared toward social needs, [words indistinct] a social budget.

Our budgetary means are not sufficient to be able to tackle problems related to the recovery of the national economy. The only real way out that we see at the moment is to use foreign financial aid. For example, in the first quarter of the next year, we plan to bring into the national economy a total of approximately $110 million, which would ensure the development of entrepreneurial activities both in the cities and in the country in all spheres. [end recording]

Finance Minister Osis was assessing the financial situation in the country.

Lithuania

Slezevicius Optimistic About 1994 Economy

LD2812175693 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius says that next year the situation in Lithuania will be more favorable than now, irrespective of which government will be in power. His remarks were published Tuesday in the newspaper LIETUVOS RYTAS.

Slezevicius, the sixth leader of the Lithuanian Government since the restoration of independence in March 1990, bases his forecast on the fact that most difficult stage of economic decline in Lithuania has been essentially overcome. From this, he foresees an upturn in the level of foreign investments in 1994. Slezevicius notes that five credit deals are now under discussion with the World Bank.

Slezevicius forecasts a lower inflation rate in 1994 relative to the average growth of wages and pensions. He says the foundation for this was laid over the past half-year, which was very difficult. Slezevicius says his government, which assumed office nine months ago, inherited debts for natural gas in the range of $43 million; debts for nuclear fuel are approximately $23 million. He notes that these problems have already been solved. Moreover, inflation, which used to reach 25 percent each month, at present levels amounts to less than 25 percent per quarter.

According to the Lithuanian prime minister, the stabilization process is not to the liking of the opposition. He recalled that since last August agricultural workers have been threatening to organize a general strike and that various meetings have already taken place. Slezevicius sees these as political attempts to destabilize the situation. Meanwhile, the prime minister believes that social circumstances are no longer favorable for strikes. In spite of pressure, threats, and ultimatums by the opposition, the government will continue with economic liberalization to ensure the stability of the national currency and solve social issues.

Slezevicius Discusses LDDP's Achievements, Prospects

WS2812133093 Vilnius TIESA in Lithuanian 10 Dec 93 No. 240 pp 1, 5

[Interview with Adolfas Slezevicius, prime minister and Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party, LDDP, chairman, by Gediminas Kirkilas, Seimas deputy and LDDP deputy chairman; place and date not given: "Three Years—Not One Day..."]

[Excerpts] [Kirkilas] Three years for a political party is not a long period of time. Most of Lithuania's political organizations are of a similar age. True, certain parties, for example, the social democrats, the Christian democrats, or the nationalists, associate themselves with the prewar parties and demonstrate their continuity. However, their members are people who grew up in the post-war community. Thus, this continuity is symbolic rather than real.

[Slezevicius] I think that this is not important, although symbols in political activities are meaningful. It is much more important that parties continue the democratic tradition which emerged in Lithuania before the war, as well as the current European tradition. Unfortunately, this is not always the case in our country. A vivid example is a "shift to the left" in some parties which view themselves as belonging to the right wing. Is it not paradoxical that the rightists are the organizers of different forms of social protest?! Their demands are a planned restoration of the elements of the "socialist" economy. The latter actually hampers market reform, pushes us backward, and delays the difficult transition to a market economy.

[Kirkilas] I would not be surprised if this came from some "leftists" or communists.... Certainly, the opposition must criticize and "press" the ruling party. However, it must base its actions on its own right-wing principles rather than political demagogy.

Nevertheless, let us go back to the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party.

[Slezevicius] In my opinion, the LDDP story is a peculiar phenomenon of our political history. It will probably be assessed much later, because today there are many factors preventing this—our own subjectivism, political ambition, competition among the parties, and so on. At any rate, we see even today that the LDDP enjoys quite a great deal of political prestige among the population. This was proven by the Seimas elections in 1992 and the presidential elections in 1993. We must preserve and continue such traits as a consequent and democratic policy, moderateness, tolerance, and pragmatism.

[Kirkilas] Our party was founded in December of 1990, and it is exactly three years old today. This happened after the 11 March Declaration of Independence, which was signed by such party leaders of that time as A. Brazauskas, V. Beriozovas, J. Paleckis, B. Genzelis, J. Minkevicius, C. Jursenas, and others. [passage omitted]

That time was really very difficult. We felt the support of Sajudis and all the Lithuanian people. By the way, there were many former leaders of the Sajudis founding group among the people who set up the LDDP and defined the system of its values. It may not be accidental that after the 1992 Seimas elections, there were more genuine Sajudis members in the LDDP faction than in all other Seimas factions taken together.

[Slezevicius] This fact is interesting and informative. It means that our people value consequent actions and devotion to democratic ideals. These traits are typical of our current party members. It was much more convenient to withdraw from the LDDP or join some "cleaner" party in December 1990. Some people did this by taking advantage of the LDDP constitutive congress. [passage omitted]

[Kirkilas] It would be incorrect to keep silent on Algirdas Brazauskas' role while speaking about the LDDP, and not only about the LDDP but also about the entire politic situation in our country. You are the second LDDP chairman to replace A. Brazauskas. This is not easy.

[Slezevicius] Yes, you are right.

Sometimes it is not difficult to assume a position. It is more difficult to win prestige, particularly after A. Brazauskas. I think, however, that this decision is correct. The LDDP has assumed all responsibility for the country's future, and it is logical that the leader of the ruling party heads the Cabinet of Ministers. True, we have come to power in a slightly different manner, but I suppose that such a tradition will emerge in Lithuania as well. It is important that the LDDP has made the first move.

[Kirkilas] This decision is also important for our potential partners abroad. Knowing that the government is led by the chairman of the ruling party, they will view the government itself as sufficiently stable and reliable. It is no accident that our political opponents are trying to "convince" us of a split and escalate this issue. Does this bring much damage to our state?

[Slezevicius] Yes, it does. However, it is we ourselves, the LDDP faction, and not our opponents, who must understand this situation and provide no fuel for such phenomena. All members of the LDDP and its faction must feel that they belong to the ruling party, and they must understand that we are living under the conditions of openness and political competition. This does not mean that there must be no criticism inside our party or something of the sort. On the contrary, it is the internal criticism that propels the party and helps us find correct decisions in this difficult situation. The opinions of ordinary LDDP members, their experience, recommendations, and proposals are very important to us. However, they must understand that the procedure of decisions is much longer and more complicated under democracy. This is not a lack of determination, as many people think. When powers are divided, discussion and coordination of opinions require more time.

[Kirkilas] Could a party, acting under the conditions of a multiparty system and competition, be compared with a family of aristocrats who never expose their family matters publicly?

[Slezevicius] There may be a slight similarity. The key political decisions mus t be adopted by the leadership in cooperation with the faction, if necessary, by consulting the party. We can and must argue inside the party. We represent Lithuania's political authority in public and, thus, act accordingly. This is the matter of the prestige of the LDDP and the entire state.

[Kirkilas] Are you not afraid that our opponents may again accuse us of hiding something from the nation and so on?

[Slezevicius] We are not hiding anything, but we have the right to our internal matters. By the way, those people who accuse us behaved the same way while in power. No member of the LDDP faction was invited to the delegations for negotiations and so on. The current delegation to the European Parliament is headed not by an LDDP member, but by Social Democrat A. Sakalas. Each delegation practically includes representatives of the opposition. This was not the case in the past, as you remember. The opposition was viewed as a traitor and an "immoral" group.

[Kirkilas] The advocates of this approach must now call themselves the opposition....

By the way, the LDDP restored this concept to the post-war political history, as you may remember. The LDDP called itself the opposition in "The Guidelines of Statehood" issued in April of 1991. We were the opposition not to statehood, as our opponents often say, but to the undemocratic tendencies of the former government, the search for "enemies," and the destructive ideology. Concerning all other issues, for example the February referendum of 1991 on the restoration of democratic and independent Lithuania, the tragic events in January, and the August coup, we were together with other Lithuanian political forces despite our disagreements.

[Slezevicius] It is this issue that the current opposition finds so difficult to learn. I do not remember a single more serious decision that was adopted by a consensus. Sometimes the tactics of the opposition remind us of the saying "the worse, the better," to say nothing of the demagogic populism in social issues, which seems to have overpowered all opposing parties.

We are often fond of saying that the government has no strategy and so on. I have said more than once that our

strategic principle is to stabilize the crisis. It is this issue that will serve us as a point of departure in discussing and defining the trends and prospects of our economic development.

Stability is necessary in all spheres—from the halt of inflation and price rises to a normal political atmosphere in society that is conducive to national intellec[illegible]d different opinions.

The first signs are already noticeable, since serious specialists are gradually joining our state life.

[Kirkilas] Let us go back to the modest anniversary of the LDDP. What can you say about our party organizations? What are their problems and prospects?

[Slezevicius] [passage omitted] The LDDP contribution to the restoration of Lithuania's statehood is considerable, and I do not doubt that it will be evaluated duly. After the victory in the 1992 Seimas elections, we have assumed all responsibility for the country's fate. I hope that we will not disappoint our supporters. I understand that this may sound too optimistic today, but can one work without believing in a better tomorrow?

[Kirkilas] That is true, even though our own party colleagues are the most exacting. This must be so because this is a sign of a healthy organization. Despite all hardships, we must rally our efforts in order not to disappoint the people and to do everything which our commitments to the voters require.

Mr. Chairman, in your opinion, what are the immediate tasks of our party?

[Slezevicius] We must prepare for the upcoming elections to the local self-governments. I think that this issue will be discussed at a separate LDDP Council meeting. This is one of the most important and difficult tasks in the near future.

Our territorial organizations must continue their inquiry into the problems of their towns and regions, submit proposals to the Seimas faction, and analyze the application of adopted laws and the problems of social security. We must learn to broaden our outlook and to understand better the mechanism of party activities under parliamentary conditions. We are holding a seminar "What Is a Parliamentary Party" on 17-18 December, which will be attended by the leaders of our territorial organizations and members of the LDDP Presidium.

[Kirkilas] You are also the prime minister of the Republic of Lithuania. I have often observed your working day, which begins at 0800 and continues.... [passage omitted]

[Slezevicius] I work as much as the problems require. Such is the time today. The working day of all of us will be normal after we lay the foundation for a normal economy, state, and society. By the way, I have noticed while visiting different countries that people live better in those states, for example, Japan or Sweden, where they work more.

Of course, it is difficult to reconcile two positions. During my visits throughout Lithuania, I try to meet with party colleagues, listen to and discuss their problems, and find ways to resolve them. I believe that my state duties do not suffer from this. On the contrary, this helps me understand human problems and expectations, and hear more candid opinions.

[Kirkilas] I dare maintain that our openness to the people is the strong point of our party activities, regardless of the current difficult situation. This may be the reason why our opponents have failed to organize broader protests, even though they have shown much effort this year. In terms of the Marxist vocabulary, our opponents are trying "to introduce the elements of organization into the people's consciousness...." Such actions are not spontaneous, but their goal is to destabilize the situation and prevent peaceful work in Lithuania.

[Slezevicius] It looks like it. First of all, the opponents raise unrealistic demands, for example, to index savings 100-fold, and later state that the government does not care. In short, they prepare the ideological basis for the future actions. Since the government understands that it is impossible to meet such demands, the opponents put forward categorical requirements. At the same time, they create an organizational structure—appoint persons responsible for strikes in each region and town, collect signatures, and so on.

[Kirkilas] Neither the Seimas nor the government or the president have ever refused to listen to the problems or express their attitude toward their resolution in one way or another. These problems are being resolved. The pace may not satisfy everyone, which is too slow due to our difficult economic situation. The latter is a result of the destructive and ill-considered policies of the former government. The most interesting thing is that the most radical advocates of destruction are today among the first ranks of the "defenders of the working people." For example, K. Uoka, L. Milcius, G. Vagnorius, and others. I have talked to economists from Estonia and Latvia. They maintain that their states indexed the inhabitants' savings many more times while still in the ruble zone. Therefore, their average wages today are much higher than ours.

[Slezevicius] It really seems to be the case. However, we are also moving ahead gradually. I think that it is better to promise less than accomplish more. For example, this month's rise in wages, although insignificant, has exceeded that in prices. People are bringing more money to the banks, and this is a sign of a recovering economy.

[Kirkilas] There are no miracles in the economy, and one should not promise them. We cannot yield to populist demands, the implementation of which would bring a new wave of inflation and price increases. I wonder whether members of the Workers' Union really support

the demands of the Farmers' Union, because their realization would result in increased food prices.

[Slezevicius] This is an interesting question. Let us return to the government's economic policy. As we have already said, its criticism is possible and necessary. However, it must not be undermined by artificially staged actions. Foreign experts also approve of this course toward stabilization. For example, (P. Hedforse), IMF representative in Lithuania, claims (the summary of his speech was published in the UN bulletin—G.K) that "the government must observe the limit of its possibilities." In his opinion, it is the "tough monetary and cautious budget policy" that helped stabilize the economy and halt the deepening crisis. The IMF representative believes that this is a "great success."

Our opinion about ourselves is more modest. However, such an assessment allows us to expect more serious assistance and bolder moves from foreign investors in Lithuania. As (P. Hedforse) has said, "the light at the end of the tunnel is already visible."

[Kirkilas] Let us hope that this is really so. Anyway, the year 1993 has been better for your government than 1992. It is enough to compare that in 1992 the rate of inflation hit 1,163 percent, while this year it has dropped eight-fold—to 154 percent.

[Slezevicius] The inflation rate will be even lower next year. We predict that it will be no more than 50-55 percent over the entire year. While last year the standard of living dropped by three times, it has increased 200 percent this year. We have all the possibilities for preserving and improving this tendency. [passage omitted]

Ignalina Plant Rejects European Loan Conditions

WS2912103993 Tallinn BNS in English 1820 GMT 28 Dec 93

[Text] Vilnius, Dec 28, BNS - The Ignalina nuclear power plant, Lithuania's chief electricity producer, has rejected the terms of a gratuitous 30-million-ECU loan from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The LIETUVOS RYTAS newspaper said the bank promised 30 million ECU, earmarked for the plant's reconstruction, if Ignalina agrees to shut down one of its reactors.

Viktor Shevaldin, Ignalina director, said the terms are unacceptable because the plant is safer when both of its reactors are in operation. In case one of the reactors breaks down, it can be cooled by using water-pumps, which are operated by electricity produced by the other reactor, he said. Besides, Shevaldin said, Lithuanian thermal power plants might not have enough fuel to satisfy the country's demand for electricity if Ignalina suddenly stops. He said the bank wants Ignalina to pull the plug on the first reactor, which is only three years older than the second one. This means that they are almost identical in terms of safety, Shevaldin said.

Ignalina began operation in 1983 and produces between 80 and 90 percent of electricity in Lithuania. According to the plant's technical documentation, the RMBK (Chernobyl-type) reactors used in Ignalina were built to last up to 30 years.

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